

THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Sunshine and showers

(IR45p) 40p

THE TABLOID

Bridget Jones: my search for Princess Margaret



THE TABLOID

The most wanted woman in America



NEWS

The most dangerous cars in Britain PAGE 3



Caning for 3,000 bad head teachers

Judith Judd
Education Editor

An unrepentant Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, yesterday said the number of incompetent teachers had only dropped from 15,000 to 13,000, and immediately opened a new front - this time against 3,000 heads who he said were not doing their job properly.

Mr Woodhead went on the offensive after new figures cast doubt on his 15,000 estimate by revealing that only 88 teachers from 4907 schools inspected since last April have been given the two lowest grades.

In the Commons, John Major told Tony Blair that he would not rule out making a new qualification for head teachers compulsory. His announce-

produced 13,000.

He suggested the difference was largely explained by better teaching but also that his own inspectors might be partly to blame. Don Foster, the Liberal Democrats' education spokesman, said: "This is a goal-post moving exercise of quite amazing proportions."

David Hart, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "Clearly the number of teachers who receive the lowest grades bears no relation to the numbers he described as incompetent a year ago."

Mr Woodhead's office has written to all inspection contractors to remind them to be tough on bad teaching. He is also considering a new inspection system which would mean that a higher proportion of teachers would be reported to the head for bad teaching.

In his annual report, Mr Woodhead said that schools were getting better as the culture in education changes. Questions were being asked, he said, about teaching methods.

More children were being grouped by ability and there was more whole-class teaching. "Primary schools are grouping their older pupils in ability sets for some teaching. Many are making more use of ability grouping within the class. In secondary schools, setting by ability is leading to more effective teaching," he said. More was also being done to take action against incompetent teachers.

However, he said standards needed to be improved in half of primary schools and two-fifths of secondaries. "The percentage of lessons judged to be unsatisfactory or poor (about 16 per cent) is an improvement on last year's figure (18 per cent). That this figure remains as high as it does, shows that the old orthodoxes continue to exert their influence in too many classrooms." Big improvements were still needed in about one in 12 primary schools and one in ten secondaries. Lessons are 5 worst for junior pupils.

Literacy and numeracy were still a worry, he said. Too many primary school children were not making enough progress.

Mr Woodhead did not suggest that the one in seven primary heads and one in ten secondary ones offering poor leadership should be sacked but he said: "The problems they are facing must be recognised and, if they are not making enough progress, governors and local authorities need to face up to the fact."

John Sutton, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, pointed out that it was only in the last two years that the Government had begun to fund the kind of training for heads which had always been necessary. Mr Hart said there was no justification for making the new heads' qualification compulsory.

Both the Prime Minister and Mrs Shephard welcomed the evidence in the report of improving standards.

Three Rs at page 8
Letters, page 13
Choice, what choice? page 14



accuser (top) and the accused

It came only hours after Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, had said on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that the qualification would remain voluntary.

Mr Major said: "I think I would like to see how it works but I certainly would not rule it out." Labour said his remarks were a further example of a bit between Mrs Shephard and the Prime Minister.

Officials from Mr Woodhead's Office for Standards in Education said the 3,000 figure was a preliminary estimate based on primary school inspections between April and December last year. Mr Woodhead offered the new figure after saying that a comparison could be made between the old system, which produced 15,000, and the new gradings, which



Lady of the dance: Charo Espino in *Arte y pasion*, in which she appears with the Paca Peña Flamenco Dance Company at the Peacock Theatre, central London, until 1 March
Photograph: Laurie Lewis
The Independent last night won the Guinness Award for the best use of black and white photography in a national newspaper. It was presented at the British Picture Editors' awards at the Guildhall, in London

Test for Milosevic as he offers power to the people

Enana Daly
Belgrade

After 78 days of protests, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia has apparently bowed to the will of his people, ordering his government to accept the opposition's victory in local elections. But last night youths looking for a return match with riot police stoned traffic police and smashed windows, provoking shooting from plainclothes policemen and increasing tension in Belgrade. The Prime Minister, Marko Marjanovic, is to implement Mr Milosevic's demand today, according to state television, and will ask parliament to enact a law allowing councillors from Zajedno, the opposition coalition, to take control of the city hall in Belgrade and 13 other large towns.

But Zajedno leaders were cautious, aware that Mr Milosevic has used such

'I will not believe this until I see Zajedno take their seats and form Belgrade's new city council'
Election crisis, page 10

concessions only to gain time. Zoran Djindjic, the most charismatic of the triumvirate leading the opposition, said Serbia's crisis had deepened since the poll on 17 November and that the Socialists would have to do more than acknowledge electoral defeat. The opposition also demands a free press and punishment of officials responsible for the electoral theft and the vi-

olent repression of demonstrators by riot police. Thousands of demonstrators gathered in Belgrade's Republic Square yesterday afternoon cheered the news and demanded that Mr Milosevic resign.

They dispersed peacefully under the watch of at least 1,000 riot police but a few dozen youths hung around and stoned traffic police, some of whom fired into the air, according to radio reports.

By 7.30pm last night, when citizens whistle and bang pots and pans to drown the propaganda on state television news, peaceful demonstrators and some hoodlums were mingled in Republic Square, muddying the waters of protest. Some youths among them were clearly determined to provoke violent scenes and within half an hour hundreds of riot police were back in the square.

Directly to jail in Monopoly sting

David Osborne
New York

When you get a letter in the post offering you something for nothing, particularly if it is cash, there has to be a catch. Usually it's an obligation first to buy something else you have absolutely no use for. On the other hand, it could be instant arrest. Especially if you are a wanted person.

This was the lesson belatedly learned by more than 250 American fugitives who fell for a fun-filled ruse pulled by the finest of New York City. The glib runaways got their cheques, but of a strictly Monopoly variety, marked with the message: "Go Directly to Jail".

The sting began when the police department sent out 2,800 letters to missing suspects, most of them wanted for small-time misdemeanours, such as drug possession and violation of probation. Purportedly from the "New York Division of Unclaimed Funds," the letters told the recipients that they were owed money and invited them to visit an address in the Bronx to collect it.

More than 800 of the letters were returned "address-unknown". A good number, who got them apparently recognised the fingerprints of the law. (The NYPD, after all, tried something similar last Thanksgiving when it tried to snare fugitives with free turkeys.)

But enough of them took the bait. Among them was Carlos Carmello, wanted for possession of marijuana. The young man travelled 3,000 miles by bus from New Mexico to meet his appointment with new-found wealth. He went directly to the Bronx and to the so-called Unclaimed Funds office, where even the receptionist was an agent under cover.

Obviously enjoying themselves, the officers went so far as to have cheques ready for each of their visitors, none of which were hankable. The dud cheques were illustrated with a depiction of a Monopoly card, with the words: "Go Directly To Jail, Do Not Pass Go, Do Not Collect \$200".

Such was the surprise of those caught by the sting that all apparently gave themselves up without violence. "It was so calm," said Deputy Inspector Anthony Klisik. "They just came in and they surrendered."

Mr Carmello was doubly pained. He had been expecting not \$200 but \$6,000. Worse, on his surrender, the police found more marijuana in his coat pockets.

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QUICKLY

Car fail crash test
Seven small cars subjected to tests by the Transport Research Laboratory failed to meet crash standards - provoking outrage from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, which said the tests had been designed so that the cars would fail.
Page 3

Coffee price hike
The cost of a cup of coffee is set to soar within the next few days as retailers pass on a rise in the price of beans.
Page 11

Clarke 'infallible'
Kenneth Clarke was given a ringing endorsement by the Prime Minister as the "infallible Chancellor" during question time in the Commons. Page 6

Major stands firm
John Major attacked the social chapter as a "Trojan horse" in a speech in Brussels, his first visit to the capital for nearly two years. He said the British government had made up its mind. "Our enterprise economy is not negotiable."
Page 9

Train crash
Four people were hurt when a freight train carrying stone balast plunged off a bridge and crashed into a building in the centre of Bexley, Kent. Page 4

Child abuse evidence
The first witnesses to give evidence to the North Wales child abuse inquiry told how they were abused but did not complain because "if anything happened to you, it was just part of the regime."
Page 4

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Man accused of murdering journalist

A 32-year-old Dublin man was yesterday charged with the murder last June of Dublin crime reporter Veronica Guerin. Paul "Hippo" Ward of Windmill Park, Crumlin, was already in custody on charges brought last October of conspiracy to murder the journalist and of being an accessory to the killing. State solicitor Clare Galligan told Kildare District Court in Dublin that the earlier charges against Mr Ward were being withdrawn. Mr Ward also faces a charge of possession and supply of cannabis at an address in Tallaght, Dublin last October, and Ms Galligan said it would be decided whether to proceed with those charges when forensic test results were delivered. Mr Ward was remanded in custody for a further week. **Alan Murdock**

Pesticides blamed for bird decline

The increasing use of herbicides and pesticides is destroying the food chain of farmland birds and threatening their survival, conservationists warned yesterday. The finding came during a study carried out by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and five other countryside groups to look into the reasons for the drastic decline in the populations of some species. The worst hit species is the tree sparrow, whose numbers fell by 89 per cent between 1969 and 1994, followed by the grey partridge (down 82 per cent), the corn bunting (80 per cent) and the skylark (58 per cent). In 1970, just 5 per cent of land was sprayed with insecticides, compared to 90 per cent in 1990. During the same period, the use of herbicides almost doubled - in 1970, each field was sprayed 1.3 times while 20 years later the figure had risen to 2.5 times.

Briton killed by Rwanda gunmen

A British human rights monitor and a Cambodian colleague were killed in south-west Rwanda when their vehicles were ambushed by gunmen. Two Rwandan assistants were also killed. The names of the victims were being withheld until families had been notified. The attack was the latest in a series of incidents in which foreigners have been targeted, and the third involving UN human rights monitors. Western Rwanda is a stronghold for Hutu insurgents, many of whom were involved in the 1994 genocidal slaughter of more than 500,000 people, and since they began returning from Zaire at the end of last year, there have been about 500 killings - raising concern about a return to civil war.

Stepfather in court on murder charge

The 23-year-old stepfather of missing schoolgirl Zoe Evans - Army private Miles Evans (pictured) - was remanded in custody by West Wiltshire magistrates yesterday accused of murdering the nine-year-old between 9 and 12 January. After the hearing at Trowbridge magistrates court, Inspector Geoff Hicks of Wiltshire police renewed an appeal for help in finding Zoe's body. He said: "We are still appealing to the public to point us in the right direction and we are looking for any evidence that might identify where she is." Fifty officers were still working on the case, Inspector Hicks added.

Runaway fraudster starts jail term

A fugitive businessman who cheated riding stables, stud farms and livery yards of £1m, was yesterday brought back to Britain from South Africa to begin a 33-month jail sentence. Peter Lane, 54, of Hopwood, Worcestershire, and a fellow director of his company, were convicted a year ago of two fraud charges after a 10-week trial. He went missing while on bail and was sentenced in his absence. **Chris Mowbray**

Police held in corruption probe

Five RUC officers - including one inspector - were among a number of men arrested yesterday by detectives involved in a major corruption inquiry linked to the sale of second-hand cars in Northern Ireland. Seven car dealers were also detained in West Tyrone, Fermanagh and South Derry. The covert operation has been going on since October 1995 and detectives travelled extensively throughout the UK as part of the investigation.

University plans new £10m library

Oxford University yesterday unveiled plans for a new £10m library to bring under one roof its collections in classics, archaeology, Egyptology and art history. The Sackler Library, proposed as the first stage of a new centre for humanities next to the Ashmolean Museum, will be financed with a gift from the Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation and matching funds from the university. The building, designed as a modern classical style, would accommodate 12,000 metres of books on the cultures of Greece, Rome, the near East and Asia, currently scattered round other university libraries. **Lucy Ward**

people



Pamela Harriman: Her loyalty to young Bill Clinton was not forgotten by the President-to-be.

Grande dame of American politics fights for her life

Pamela Harriman, the British-born US ambassador to France and grande dame of American politics, was gravely ill in hospital in Paris yesterday after suffering a brain haemorrhage on Monday night. Mrs Harriman, 76, the former daughter-in-law of Sir Winston Churchill, was taken ill while swimming in the pool at the Ritz Hotel. Her son, the Conservative MP Winston Churchill, flew to Paris yesterday to be at her bedside. President Jacques Chirac asked the foremost French surgeons to make themselves available to the American Hospital in the suburb of Neuilly where Mrs Harriman was said to be in "very serious" condition. President Clinton, a friend and protégé of Mrs Harriman long before he reached the White House, was said to be deeply concerned. "The thoughts of the President and the First Lady are with Mrs Harriman at this moment," a White House spokesman said. Like no other political personality still living, Pamela Harriman can claim personal acquaintance with most leading figures on both sides of the Atlantic for the last six decades. Born Pamela Digby in Farnborough in 1920, she married Randolph Churchill when she was 19, on the eve of the Second World War. On her divorce at the end of the war, she moved to France, where she was friendly with, amongst others, Gianni Agnelli, Andre Malraux, and Jean Cocteau. In 1960 she married the Hollywood producer Leland Hayward. After his death in 1971, she met, and married, the billionaire statesman and political fixer, Averell Harriman, whom she had known during the war. For 15 years, their mansion in Georgetown, Washington was one of the principal political salons in the United States, and the Harrimans among the leading figures, and financiers, of the Democratic Party. After her third husband's death in 1986, Mrs Harriman continued the role alone, encouraging, amongst others, the ambitions of a young southern governor, Bill Clinton, and a young southern Senator, Al Gore. She became ambassador to Paris when Clinton became President in 1993. It was strongly rumoured a year ago that she would relinquish the post at the start of a second Clinton term. The rumour was renewed only this week by Newsweek, which predicted she would be replaced by Frank Wisner, ambassador in New Delhi, or Felix Rohatyn, an economist close to the President. **John Lichfield - Paris**

The teenage girl who died trying to cure her acne

A teenage girl trying to cure her acne died from a blood clot after taking prescription skin-care pills which also work as oral contraceptives, an inquest heard yesterday. Christina Robinson (right), a 17-year-old A-level student from Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, died from a massive blood clot on her lung after taking the pills. She had tried a variety of antibiotics and creams to get rid of her spots but when they did not work she was advised to turn to a pill called Dianette.



Six weeks later - half-way through her second monthly packet - she suffered breathing difficulties and collapsed, according to her mother, Hilary. She collapsed again a week later and died in intensive care, said Mrs Robinson. Dianette, which has been taken by thousands of women, has the same possible side-effects, such as deep vein thrombosis, as contraceptive pills. However, family planning experts yesterday urged women not to panic and stressed that the chances of women developing deep vein thrombosis from being

on Dianette were "extremely rare" - less than 60 in 100,000. Schering Health Care, makers of the pill, said: "We are very sorry to hear of this case...Precautions for the use of all oral contraceptives are well known and they remain an extremely effective and well-tolerated method of contraception." Yesterday Mrs Robinson said: "We want to make it clear that we do not blame the professionals in this, we just want to warn other people what can happen." An inquest was opened yesterday in Great Yarmouth and adjourned until May. **Matthew Brace**

Firth left cold by screen heat

Colin Firth, the actor who set female hearts racing as Charles Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, claims the heaving bodies in the hit series left him cold.

He told the *Radio Times* "it wasn't my cup of tea." "I felt like a drug dealer who doesn't get high on his own supply. I'll peddle the stuff but won't use it. All I did was put on a costume and act."

Firth is now starring in *Nostromo* on BBC2. He will soon be seen in *The English Patient*, the big screen adaptation of Michael Ondaatje's Booker Prize-winning novel, and also the film of Nick Hornby's *Fever Pitch*.

Firth is touchy about his own romantic life. "The implication that I go around with a bimbo on my arm is not correct," he said. He said of his year-long relationship with Jennifer Ehle, his *Pride and Prejudice* co-star: "It wasn't just a location romance." He added: "It's perceived that actors go off with each other, and that is not... entirely unjustified. The outside world disappears, to be replaced by this intense world. You don't have to worry about... the gas bill. You just forget things." **David Lister**

briefing

PUBLIC SERVICES

Opting-out blamed for lack of accountability

Doctors, teachers and housing officers believe they are now less accountable to the public they serve as a result of the Government's programme of encouraging schools, hospitals and housing estates to "opt out" of local authority or NHS control. A two-year study by Brunel University, sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council, is sceptical of claims that opting-out has increased efficiency or made these organisations any more responsive to the public. The researchers dispute assertions by ministers that things are better outside the control of councils or the National Health Service and argue there is no reliable data to go which to have "before and after" comparisons. *Opting Out and the Experience of Self Management*, ESRC, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1UJ. **David Walker**

HOUSING

Building confidence in recovery

The number of new homes being built in Britain has reached its highest level for over two years, according to Government statistics. Ministers claimed this was further evidence of a strong recovery in the housing market, with a 33 per cent rise in the last quarter of 1996, compared with the same period a year earlier. The number of new homes started in the whole of 1996 was put at 174,200, 4 per cent higher than in 1995. The latest figures for homes under construction are broadly in line with the Government's census-based prediction that 4.4 million extra homes are needed in England over the next 25 years. But these statistics also show that while private-sector house construction is gathering strength, public-sector building by housing associations for poorer families remains in a slump, following severe cuts in Government grants. **Nicholas Schoon**



EMPLOYMENT

Real-terms earnings in decline

Government claims of rising prosperity are called into question today by new analysis of official figures. Data provided by the House of Commons Library to the Labour Party shows a 1.2 per cent fall in real earnings for the last three years. Northern England has fared worst, with a decline of 12.5 per cent in the north-west and 4.7 per cent in Yorkshire and Humberside. The biggest rise was enjoyed in Greater London with a 7.6 per cent rise, but the South-East outside the capital experienced a decline of 0.5 per cent. When the pay of part-timers was taken into account, real median earnings stood at £228 in spring 1993 and £225 in spring 1996. The calculation points to the national person in the middle earnings, taking into account the rate of inflation. **Barrie Clement**

AVIATION

Missile protection recommended

A commission of aviation experts convened by President Bill Clinton following the crash of TWA 800 last summer is to recommend fitting commercial airliners with anti-missile devices to help protect them against terrorist attack. A draft of the commission's report, which should be officially published next week, includes a call on the US government to "prepare for use of surface-to-air missiles by terrorists", among other sweeping recommendations on improving flight safety. The possibility of a missile attack was seriously considered by investigators into the TWA crash, following eyewitness reports of a streak of light touching the plane before it fell. But the theory has fallen from favour, with an explosion in a central fuel tank now seen as the likely cause. **David Usborne**

SCIENCE

'Human pollen' causes hay fever

Both the immediate and lingering effects of hay fever are caused because pollen particles closely resemble a molecule found in the human body, according to US scientists. Two new studies published in this month's issue of the journal *Structure* discovered that the three-dimensional structure of a protein called profilin, which binds pollen to other molecules, is the same in many places as that of human profilin. **Charles Arthur**

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

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سكرا من الاميل

Nice car: roomy, nippy and economical – but is it safe?

Randeep Ramesh and Christian Wolmar

New crash tests designed for safety-conscious motorists yesterday provoked a furious row between the motor industry and consumer groups.

All seven small cars failed tests carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory in Berkshire, provoking outrage from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders whose spokesman, Roger King, said: "These tests have been designed on purpose so that cars fail them. Cars are not built to these standards and therefore they cannot possibly meet them."

The £1m testing programme ranked the Rover 100, the latest version of the Metro which is one of Britain's best-selling small hatchbacks, as the worst for car safety in the results issued by the Department of Transport-sponsored crash tests. The Rover 100, received just one star out of a possible four in the Euro New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) ratings. The Vauxhall Corsa, Nissan Micra, Fiat Punto and Renault Clio fared slightly better, scoring two stars.

The Ford Fiesta, Britain's best-selling small car, and the Volkswagen Polo topped the table with three stars.

The findings of the survey will be published in the motor magazine *What Car?* and will be made available to all 12 million RAC and AA members. However, the Government will not force dealers to carry the information.

"We think and hope that industry will use these results to promote their cars," said John Bowls, Road Safety Minister.

Two new cars of each model were bought by the testers and subject to side and front impact tests. Crashes with pedestrians were also tested by shunting dummy limbs and heads at the front of the car.

In the tests, the Corsa, which was bought by nearly 76,000 motorists last year, saw the passenger's head severely damaged by hitting the glove compartment in a frontal collision. The driver's knees in a Renault Clio were found to be particularly vulnerable and many of the airbags did not make a clean contact with the dummies.

Motoring organisations welcomed the new results. "At last the consumer will be able to buy a safer car," said Edmund King, a spokesman for the RAC, one of the test sponsors. Research from Sweden has shown that half of fatal and disabling injuries could be saved if people chose the cars that gave the best

protection in each weight category.

Rover disagreed with the findings saying that the tests were "more severe than required by current legislation". The company said the tests were "too fast". However Adrian Hobbs, of the Transport Research Laboratory, which carried out the tests, said that "we had to consider speeds where fatalities were likely to occur".

The manufacturers have criticised the tests, arguing that they carry out much more extensive testing on their models. However, Edmund King of the RAC pointed out that the manufacturers have failed to release information to allow people to compare models on the basis of safety. He said: "This type of testing is carried out in Australia and is very influential in determining which models people buy."

One of the testers said he was very sceptical of the manufacturers willingness to publicise a car's failings. "We all see manufacturers shouting about how quickly they go from 0-60 mph. How willing would they be to say how slowly they can do 60-0 mph?" said one engineer.

Dealerships have also criticised the programme. "If you have a Rover dealership it is going to be very difficult to say 'oh yes it is much less safe than the other make' ... I mean, it hardly helps," said David Leibling, a spokesman for Lex Service, one of Britain's largest motor showrooms.

Sheila McKechie, the chief executive of the Consumers' Association, said that she would be writing to the Association of British Insurers to see whether the results could be used to lower premiums for certain marques.

The NCAP tests will also test family saloons with the results being published later this year.

Car manufacturers have fought on the Continent to prevent the testing programme from receiving European funding.

Martin Bangemann, the industry commissioner, wrote to safety organisations last year warning them that such testing could damage the "brand image" of European car manufacturing companies.

The rating system allows customers to see how likely they would suffer from serious injuries if they were driving in one of the cars tested. The worst results would mean that drivers would have a 20 per cent chance of incurring an injury while the best would mean drivers had a one in 20 chance of escaping without a scratch.

Motor industry chiefs beef over safety tests

Christian Wolmar

The motor industry has been lobbying fiercely against these safety tests for the past few days, culminating in a luncheon at the plush City Rhodes restaurant just off Fleet Street yesterday, timed to ensure that reporters could not go to Crowther for the briefing on the tests.

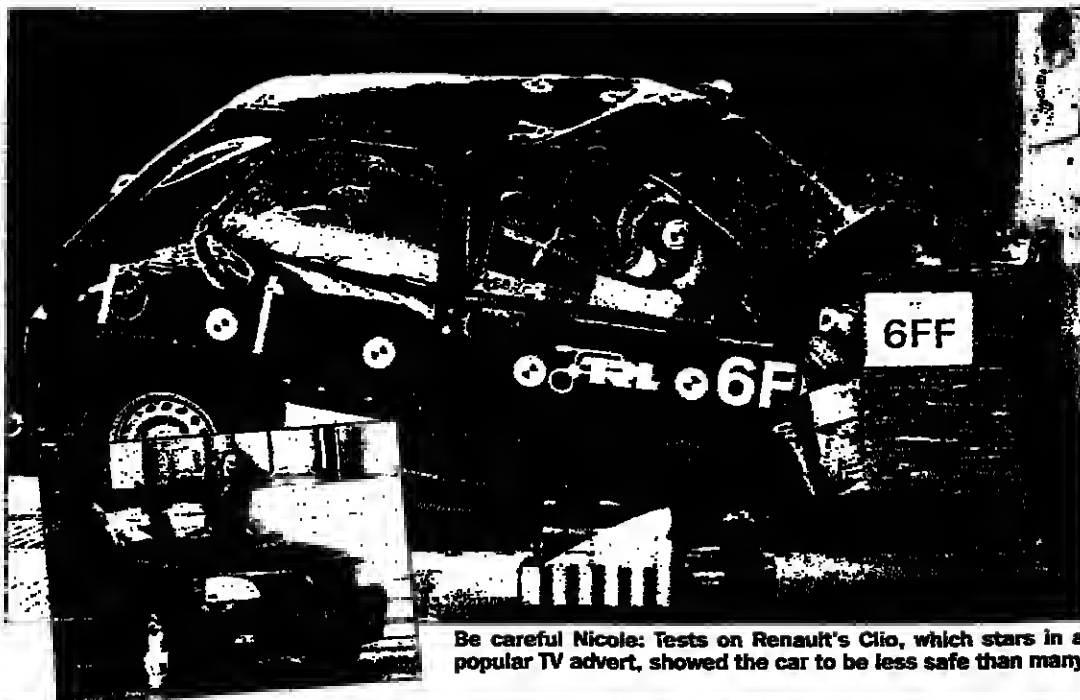
David Coulthard, the racing driver, was wheeled out to give a talk on safety and a series of spokesmen for the industry attempted to "set the record straight". Roger King, spokesman for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said: "We would not like to give the impression that we are here to whinge and whine about this report."

He could have fooled the 50 or so diners who had to put up with over an hour's haranguing about the inadequacy of the

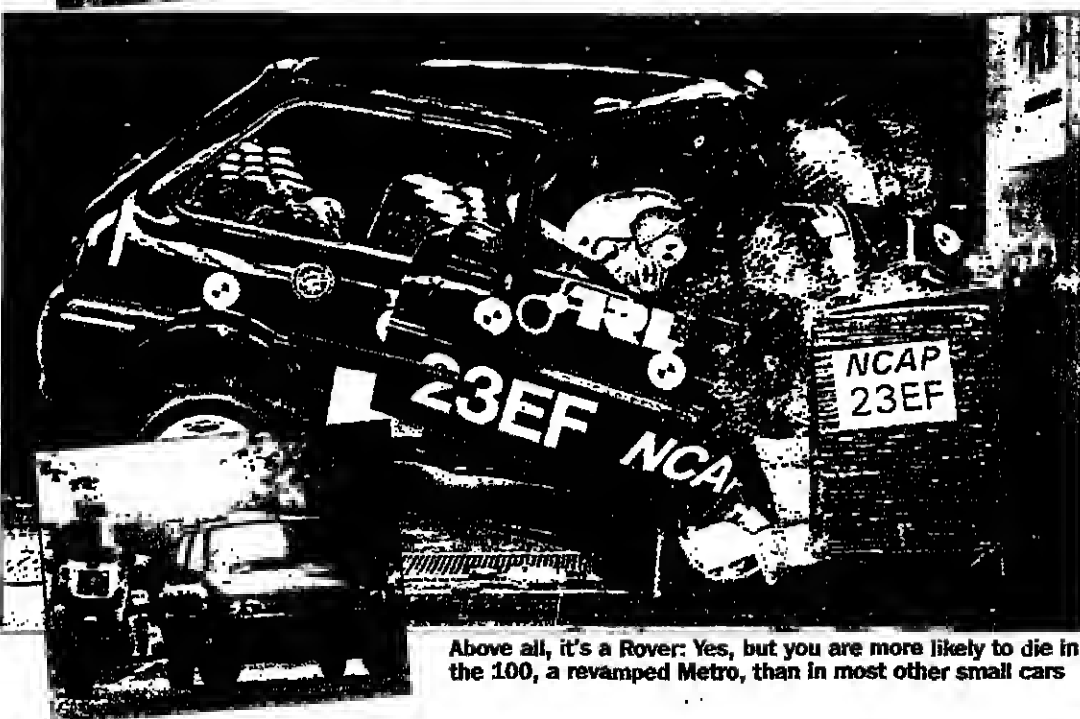
tests while waiting for a first course that did not come until after 2pm. A bad mistake since everyone knows a journalist on an empty stomach is a bad-tempered journalist.

The message from the organisers, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, was that the industry is concerned about safety but that the tests performed by the Transport Research Laboratory were inadequate. "You have to judge safety on more than just two tests," said Mr King.

The diners, however, were more concerned about their own health. Faced with something that looked like beef, one journalist asked Mr King anxiously: "Is it British beef?" A waiter said it was Scottish lamb but by the amount left on people's plates, the journalists were not convinced.



Be careful Nicole: Tests on Renault's Clio, which stars in a popular TV advert, showed the car to be less safe than many



Above all, it's a Rover: Yes, but you are more likely to die in the 100, a revamped Metro, than in most other small cars



German pride: Living up to the marque's sturdy image, the Volkswagen Polo scored highly in the crash tests

Bazaar tale of King Pepi and the Egyptian souvenirs

Jojo Moyes

A leading antiques restorer smuggled stolen tomb relics out of Egypt by painting them to look like cheap bazaar souvenirs, even marking one with the word "Egypt", a court was told yesterday.

Once back in England, Jonathan Tokeley-Parry, known as "Jonny", cut up and repainted the relics so they could be resold without trace, it was said at Knightsbridge Crown Court in west London.

On the first day of the trial, members of the jury were told that Mr Tokeley-Parry said to Mark Perry, whom he commissioned to smuggle the pieces out of Egypt, that he was "doing the Egyptians a favour" by restoring them to their former glory. Earlier, they were shown photographs of Mr Tokeley-Parry and an Egyptian accomplice sawing up a false door from the tomb of Heteptka, before the sections were resold.

Mr Tokeley-Parry has pleaded not guilty to three counts of handling stolen goods, including artefacts from the pyramid tombs of Heteptka and King Pepi and a bronze figure of the Egyptian god Horus.

Paul Dodgson, for the prosecution, told the jury that the careful disguising of the well-documented valuables once they were in England was essential if they were to be resold undetected.

"If you can mislead the prospective purchasers on where it came from, then you can also avoid the conclusion that the object was stolen after 1983," he said. This was the date on which the exports of Egyptian relics were banned under law.

The court was told that Mark Perry, an odd-job man, was introduced to Mr Tokeley-Parry in 1992 by a mutual friend. With one child and another on the way, Mr Perry said he was keen to earn extra money.

"He [Mr Tokeley-Parry] asked if I would be interested in doing a bit of smuggling. I wasn't interested at the time," Mr Perry said. "He said it wasn't drugs, it was antiques. I was all right with that."

Mr Perry told the court that Mr Tokeley-Parry, who was said to have already attempted to recruit someone else, agreed to pay him £500 a trip to an as yet unnamed destination. "I was over the moon. It was nearly the same as I was earning in a month," he said.

Mr Perry, who had done very little travelling, said he assumed that "smuggling" meant that he would be breaking minor export laws. "I spoke to Jonathan Tokeley-Parry the next day. I

think I said something like 'I'm in'. He laughed ... he said 'I knew you would'."

Mr Perry said he was given a black Samsonite suitcase with combination locks, which Mr Tokeley-Parry told him were best for security, and told to buy some new clothes, for which he was given a loan.

The first trip he was to be accompanied by Mr Tokeley-Parry. "I thought if he's coming with me it can't be that difficult," Mr Perry said.

He said that when they arrived at the Windsor Hotel in Cairo in September 1992, Mr Tokeley-Parry checked himself as Dr Johnson. He appeared to be well known to hotel staff. Soon after they arrived, Mr Perry said, Egyptian people brought antiquities to their hotel room, including figurines and a stone relief. He said Mr Tokeley-Parry showed him how to "paint them up".

"We painted them up. You ended with a piece that looked as if it came from a bazaar"

"We first had some sort of liquid, B72. It hardened as you painted it on. I suppose to save damage." Afterwards, they would apply gold leaf and disguise distinguishing features by, for instance, painting hieroglyphics black. "You ended up with a piece that looked like something out of a bazaar," Mr Perry said.

On the journey home, some days later, Mr Tokeley-Parry told him that they should ignore each other and they sat in separate parts of the return flight. Mr Perry was told, if questioned by customs, to say he had bought the pieces at a bazaar.

The court was told that Mr Perry subsequently made a succession of trips for Mr Tokeley-Parry between 1992-93, collecting antiquities to be disguised and sold back in England. Mr Dodgson said the fact that the goods were stolen in Egypt did not matter to this court. "There is no doubt that the items were stolen. They belonged to the state of Egypt and therefore they are stolen goods," he said.

The case, which is expected to last six weeks, continues today.

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news

Witnesses tell of child abuse at Welsh home

Roger Dobson

The first witnesses in the North Wales child abuse inquiry told yesterday how they were physically abused at a children's home when they were teenagers and how difficult it was to complain.

Being sent to the now-closed Bryn Estyn home was, according to one witness, regarded as a punishment.

Asked why he did not complain, one witness said: "It used to go on all the time. When you are 14 or 15, who do you complain to? I didn't complain, I didn't know how to complain. If anything happened to you it was just part of the regime."

Another said he saw it as an approved school: "I was there to be treated the way I was."

The Waterhouse Tribunal, which is expected to take one year hearing evidence, heard that the first three witnesses had all been resident at Bryn Estyn, Wrexham, in the mid-1970s. Another 30 former residents of the home are due to give evidence over the next two weeks.

Each of the three said they had been struck by the former carworker Paul Wilson who three years ago was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.



Sir Ronald Waterhouse: Will hear evidence for one year

suspected for two years, for physically assaulting boys at the home.

The tribunal was also told of bullying among the residents of the home which had around 60 residents at any one time. The tribunal chairman, Sir Ronald Waterhouse, has ruled that none of the alleged victims or the alleged perpetrators can be named except where they have been convicted.

About 180 former residents of homes in North Wales are due to give evidence. About 80 people have been accused of abuse and most of them are expected to give evidence.

Because of the trauma of giving

evidence about alleged abuse, a special counselling service has been set up for former residents. One of yesterday's witnesses, who was being questioned about an allegation he had made, said: "Do you know how hard it is for me to stand here today?"

The tribunal will hear evidence from 26 former residents of Bryn Estyn who complained of abuse. Another nine statements are being made by complainants who will not give evidence.

The tribunal was set up last year because of increasing concern about allegations of widespread abuse, both physical and sexual, at homes across North Wales.

One of the witnesses, now 33, said of Paul Wilson: "Basically he was a bully who would pick on weaker children and those he didn't like."

Another, who was allegedly hit in the stomach, said: "He didn't hurt me, he was just being macho."

The witnesses told the tribunal that they were unaware of any system for complaining at the home, which is one of more than 30 where there have been allegations of abuse made. The tribunal continues.



Engine of destruction: The scene at Bexley in Kent yesterday after a freight train plunged off the track while crossing a viaduct. Photograph: PA

Crash train hurtles off side of bridge

James Cusick

Engineering investigators will spend today trying to find out exactly what caused the derailment of a train which plunged off a bridge and ploughed into a building in the centre of Bexley, in south London.

Emergency service workers who arrived at the crash site near Bexley station just after noon yesterday said afterwards that it was a miracle no one had been killed.

John Berry, the London Ambulance operations manager at the scene, said that four men had been rescued from the rubble. He described three of them as "walking wounded" who had miraculously sustained only minor injuries and said the fourth was being treated for head and pelvic injuries. The four were last night being treated at Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup.

The train, operated by the freight franchise English Scottish Welsh Railways, was en route

from Three Bridges in West Sussex to Gillingham in Kent when it was derailed on a raised section above Victorian arches. Staff working in the businesses underneath described the crash as "like an earthquake".

Six of the train's 19 wagons plus two engines came off the track and ploughed into the edge and roof of the arches, ripping away yards of masonry. The overturned wagons containing stone ballast spilled their freight over the area, burying cars, trees, vans and outhouses belonging to the small engineering and motor companies below.

Rescue teams continued to work last night with thermal imaging cameras, trying to establish that no one was left underneath the mounds of rubble.

Structural engineers from track owner Railtrack said that the Victorian bridge itself was still intact, despite the force of the derailment. A spokesman said: "It is the derailment which has caused damage. The train

came off the track and crashed into the edge of the archway."

Railtrack said the company's primary aim was to establish the reason for the derailment but insisted that the bridge was safe and they believed it had not contributed to the accident, adding that comprehensive structural checks were carried out every six years on all railway bridges, with visual checks being carried out every year.

However, a number of the businesses in the Bexley archways claimed that Railtrack had carried out no check in the last two years. Mike and Celia Sheehan, who own The Printers, said: "We have been here two years and Railtrack have conducted no tests. This is now a worry to us. We don't want to work here until we know it is safe."

Railtrack headquarters in London said that although the cause of the derailment had yet to be established they had no immediate plans to carry out nationwide checks on other Victorian stone archways.

Wren suffered 'Chinese torture'

A former Wren became clinically depressed after a "Chinese torture" of sexual harassment and bullying from Navy colleagues, a psychiatrist told an industrial tribunal yesterday.

Dr David Enoch, a consultant psychiatrist who treated Lesley Morris, 23, in March 1996 - 10 months after she had left the Navy - said: "The constant sexual harassment and bullying were a massive precipitant in her depression. In my view it will take a long time for it to fade and will be a source of vulnerability for the rest of her life."

Miss Morris, from Shotton, near Chester, was discharged from the Navy in May 1995 as "temporarily unsuitable" after she took an overdose of paracetamol tablets. She is claiming constructive dismissal from the service.

Dr Enoch, emeritus consultant psychiatrist at the Royal Liverpool Teaching Hospital, said the underlying feelings of failure at having to leave the Navy would be with Miss Morris for a long time.

The Manchester tribunal heard that she had been mentally scarred by her experiences. But Dr Enoch admitted that other factors may also have contributed to her depression.

"There were other reasons, but the main reason was this Chinese torture. It was constant humiliation. It was made worse by the fact that she wanted to be in the Navy and wanted to stay in the Navy," he said. The case continues.

Dorrell to shake up care in community

Glenda Cooper

Radical plans to reform care in the community were put forward yesterday after the Government admitted that current practice had "failed too often".

"The status quo is not an option," said Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, launching the Green Paper on mental health yesterday. It listed four proposals for dealing with the mental health system aimed at preventing future communication breakdowns between health and social services which have been blamed for a succession of care in the community tragedies.

These include Stephen Laudat who stabbed a fellow patient 82 times, Anthony Smith who killed his mother and brother and Christopher Clunis who stabbed to death Jonathan Zito at a London underground station in 1993.

Last month a report by the research body the King's Fund into London's mental health services found that the capital was falling the mentally ill, with services near to collapse and unable to meet the demands made on them.

The Green Paper's most far-reaching proposal involves setting up a new statutory authority directly accountable to the Health Secretary which would be responsible for both health and social services for the mentally ill. At present the changes will only relate to mentally ill adults. A second option would designate either health or

local authorities as the single agency in charge of psychiatric and social care.

Other suggestions are for health and local authorities to establish new joint bodies between them, or to delegate particular functions or responsibilities to each other.

"We either have to demonstrate that we can improve co-ordination by a number of administrative means within the statutory framework, or we have to change the statutory framework. The status quo has failed too often," said Mr Dorrell.

"I think it is clear that any policy based purely on care in the community will not be a sensible policy to pursue," he added. His proposals met with a mixed reaction from mental health charities. The charity Sane backed the single unitary authority, seeing it as the most effective and economic way of providing help, 24-hour care and properly trained staff.

But the charity Mind said setting up new unitary mental health authorities would only result in "further upheaval and disruption".

The National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts and the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health also rejected the idea of new authorities, and called for a mental health agency headed by a single manager while health and social services departments retained their existing responsibilities.

Developing Partnerships in Mental Health, published by The Stationery Office price £6.85

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Prejudices run deep among ethnic groups

Jason Bennett
Crime Correspondent

Large numbers of Asian, Afro-Caribbean, and Jewish people in Britain hold racist views about each other, according to a report published yesterday which challenges the belief that most prejudices are held by whites.

Authors of the survey described the findings as threatening to open up "a Pandora's box" on the race issue. The study of more than 1,700 people also suggests that Asians, blacks, and Jews are more prejudiced about inter-racial marriages than whites. Almost all white citizens believe that the British are prejudiced. In addition, white people were found to be anxious about their British identity, losing their "culture" and jobs.

But the surprise finding of the Institute for Public Policy Research study is the apparent widespread prejudices held by non-whites in Britain.

Evidence was found of inter-ethnic racism particularly between blacks and Asians, and a belief by the Asian and Jewish community that Afro-Caribbeans are harming improvements made in race relations.

In a rare piece of research on British racial prejudices the NOP polling organisation questioned 933 whites, 282 Asians, 252 Afro-Caribbean's and 252 Jews during October and November last year.

On the question of inter-racial marriages almost half the Jews questioned said they would mind if one of their close relatives married an Afro-

Caribbean, compared to 46 per cent of Asians and 24 per cent of whites.

Jews were also strongly opposed to close relatives marrying Asians, with 47 per cent saying they would mind, compared to 28 per cent of whites and 18 per cent of blacks.

Marriage to Jews was opposed by 40 per cent of Asians, 19 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans, and 15 per cent of whites. Some of the opposition is believed to be due to religious differences.

Asians, followed by Afro-Caribbeans, are most likely to think that the majority of refugees claiming asylum are bogus. Asians are also more likely to think that there are too many Africans and Asians immigrating to Britain.

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, a research fellow at the IPPR, said: "[It is a] complex picture and it will not do us any good to deny inter ethnic problems and white anxiety."

She added: "I hope we don't have the USA condition where you have an awful backlash from whites [against the] ethnic community, but also between the different ethnic groups."

"We were worried that we were opening up a Pandora's box with these surveys."

In a more detail group discussions researchers found people divided into four ideological groups. The "die hards", who are openly racist and tend to be white working class.

The "I'm not racist but ..." who are racist but do not admit it. They are often middle-class, white females and first generation Asians, who say things such as: "I don't care what

colour someone's skin is, but they can't come over here and get more than we do."

The "comfortable liberals", who are usually hand-wringing, white educated professionals with strong anti-racist views.

The fourth group comprises the "young optimists" who tend to be young and include more Asians and blacks, and mix with other ethnic groups and feel racism is wrong.

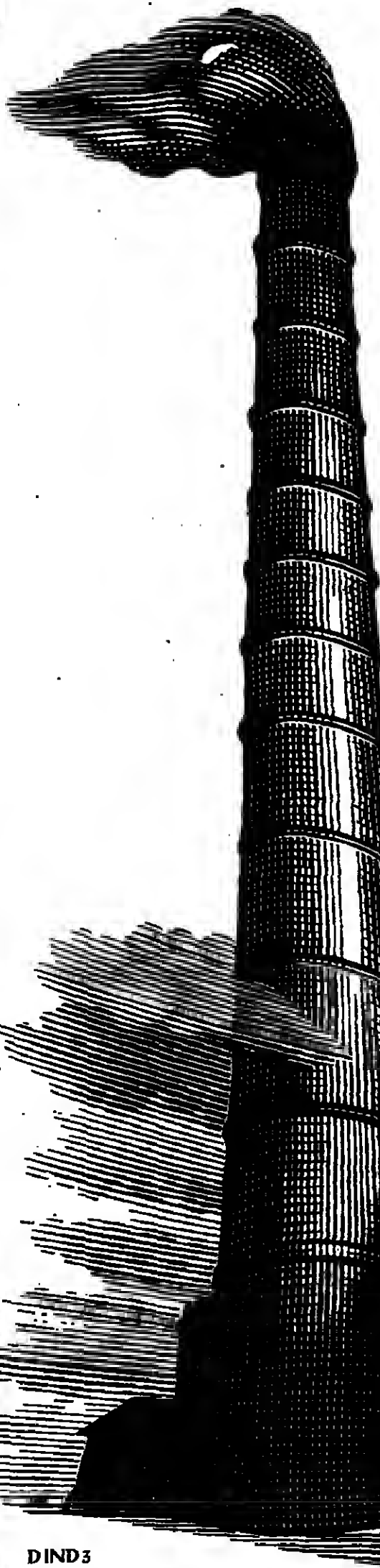
A typical comment among this group was: "How can you judge everyone just by the colour they are."

Other findings from the institute's research include the view that immigration is not an important issue among the vast majority of the public.



Jurassic lark: A model being delivered yesterday at the Clocktower centre in Croydon, south London, for the dinosaur exhibition, Dinomitas, which starts its national tour there next Thursday. It is a fun look at the lives of dinosaurs from conception through to teenage years. Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

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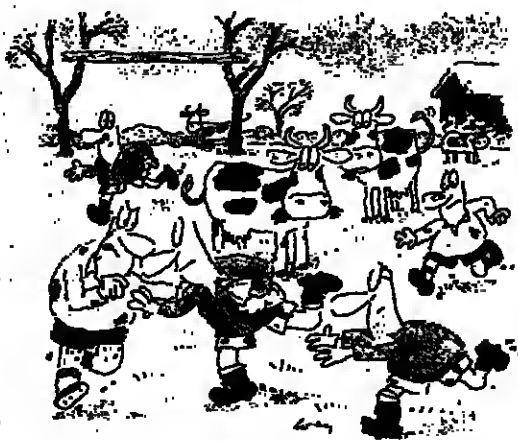
Freedom - the children

By Ruth Silcock

"We're worried about the children.
They race round the field in the evening
As if they were wild things, crazy
Or sickening for something.
Why do they play the fool
The minute they come out of school?"

How can we help the children?
Is it the food we give them?
They're not bad children, lazy
Or glum. We forgive them,
But why do they race in the evening,
Silly and strange and leaping?"

Ruth Silcock's collection *A Wonderful View of the Sea* (which includes this poem) is published by Arvill Press at £7.95. Several of the poems draw on her former career as a social worker with both adults and children; she has also written several children's books.



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Competitive edge: The Tory MP Ian Bruce (right) coming in ahead of Labour's Austin Mitchell to win the House of Commons' annual Bramley and Spoon race at Westminster yesterday

'Infallible' Clarke left red-faced

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Kenneth Clarke yesterday was given a ringing endorsement by the Prime Minister as the "infallible Chancellor" which left both Tories and Labour MPs roaring for more as election fever again gripped the House of Commons.

John Major's remarks were intended to embarrass the Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, for his endorsement of Mr Clarke's limits on spending and tax.

But the Chancellor's face turned bright red with embar-

assment at the Prime Minister's words, which echoed Baroness Thatcher's endorsement of Nigel Lawson as "unassailable" shortly before her Chancellor resigned. Mr Major also ducked Labour taunts about the rumours that the Tories could abandon the Wirral South by-election to call an early general election.

John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, said: "John Major's refusal to confirm whether the by-election will go ahead shows all the signs of a conspiracy to deny the people of Wirral South their vote on February 27."

There were continued signs that the Tories are preparing for defeat in the by-election, and Mr Major is teasing the Opposition about the election date.

Tory MPs have been asking Conservative Central Office to clear up confusion between Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, who said they would win the by-election and Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, who said the voters would give the Government a kicking. The MPs were told that Mr Heseltine was "nearer to the message".

Although Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, will

today reinforce Mr Major's attack on Labour on Europe, Tory Euro-sceptics were unimpressed with Mr Major's sally into Brussels against the social chapter. "He should not be using a speech in Brussels to carry on the election campaign at home. It will prove counter-productive," said one disgruntled Tory MP.

The Shadow Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, will hit back today accusing Mr Major of "demeaning" the role of Prime Minister by his Brussels speech. Setting out Labour's position on Europe for the election, Mr Cook will say: "The grotesque

caricature to which Mr Major reduced the social chapter demeans both the level of political debate and the standing of his office."

Attacking the Euro-sceptics as the "militant tendency" of the Tory party, he will challenge Mr Major to justify his claim that half a million British jobs would be under threat from the social chapter. "There is nothing in the social chapter which threatens British competitiveness," Mr Cook will say in a lecture hosted by the Centre for European Reform.

Mr Cook, who said at the weekend that it would be diffi-

cult to stay out of a stable European single currency in 2002, last night insisted that he was not committing Labour to entry of the single currency, if it was established on time.

"If we feel that Britain is able to benefit from the advantages of the single currency, we will go in. If it is not in a position in which it can compete on level terms within a single currency, with the monetary obligations, we will not go in."

He said Labour would make its judgement on the economic conditions, whereas the Tories were in the "grip of dogma and prejudice".

DAVID Aaronovitch

Bobbitt strategy and cunning traps

Tony Banks was dazzled, and he did not like it. On a point of order, he raised the "increased luminosity" in the chamber. The extra light had, he quipped, reminded him how "ugly they are on the other side".

The ungallant (but luminously correct) Mr Banks may well have been referring to his *bête noire* for the day, the Environment minister, Sir Paul Beresford – a Kiwi dentist knighted by Baroness Thatcher for services to Wandsworth Council. "Go back to your billabong!" Mr Banks shouted at one point during a Beresfordian extraction of a political point from an anaesthetised Labour or Liberal Democrat council.

It may well have been Kent County Council. Traditionally Tory, it has fallen to the barbarian hordes, and huge cuts are now having to be made in spending on education. The council blames the Government, and the endangered Kent Tory MPs are desperately blaming the council. Jacques "Buzz-saw" Arnold invited the Mouth Mangler to lay into the wasters of the garden of England. Sir Paul did. Kent council was trying on an old trick: "cutting off something vital and then showing the bleeding stumps!"

While we were pondering this colourful Antipodean phrase (What exactly had been severed? was this another vile American import: the Bobbitt strategy?) Labour's tall and nervous spokesmanship, Graham Allen, had launched into a little tirade about how – come the revolution – Labour's candidates in the Kent seats would be more patriotically pro-Kent than the snivelling quings presently in place (a fat lot of good it will do them too, since Gordon won't give 'em a penny extra, or lift the spending cap). The Gob Grubber was ready. "A double blow here!" he exclaimed in the tones that have shrunk the testicles of thousands of male root-canal patients. On the one hand we have the bleeding stumps – and on the other the counting of chickens!

It had all become too surreal: stumps and bleeding chickens, bridge-work, closing schools and Jacques Arnold. I closed my eyes and when I opened them again it was Prime Minister's question-time. The Labour leader Tony Blair had reverted to one of his "I'm a responsible guy" short single questions, and sat down (to spend the next 10 minutes stroking his chin, examining his tie as though an alien had affixed it to his chest when he was not looking, and gazing at the roof to see where this alien might have escaped to). It was left to the formidable Denis MacShane to do the damage. The Rotherham dandy drew himself up, buttoned his jacket, adjusted his cuffs, cleared his throat – and launched. What about it? Clarke and his imposition of an airport tax, which would cost a family of four an average of 80 quid a throw, eh?

But, said John Major, had not the honourable gent's own shadow Chancellor just endorsed all the spending plans of said Clarke? "The Chancellor," he said, "is infallible!" Up till now chancellors have been "unassailable". Poles, alone, have been infallible. Mixing them up may be unwise.

Another Labour dandy, former firebrand and current DKNY clotheshorse Peter Hain was on hand with a terrible trap dug for Mr Major.

The Prime Minister had told Japanese industry that he could not wait for the Euro, but told Teddy Taylor MP that it was an abomination of hell. "Which," asked Mr Hain, "of these two views espoused by him were correct. Or is he infallible?" "No," replied the Prime Minister. "They're both incorrect". Philosophers will be discussing that one for years to come.

Blair gives signal to put the Tube back on track

Steve Boggan

Tony Blair yesterday committed a Labour government to modernising the London Underground network in partnership with the private sector, and attacked Conservative plans to privatise the system.

During a speech on Labour's plans for a modernised, integrated transport system, Mr Blair said Labour would keep "strategic control" of the Underground, whilst allowing the private sector to provide trains and maintain tracks.

Responding to leaks of the Government's plans to sell off London Underground, which is valued at up to £13bn, for only £600m, the Labour leader told a meeting of industrialists in London: "They [the Government's plans] offer the prospect of windfall gains for private shareholders but no new investment to improve services for passengers until, at the earliest, 2001. Tube fares will rise each year until privatisation, but

once privatised, there would be no guarantee of service levels being maintained."

The Government appeared last night to have postponed its plans to announce the privatisation of the Underground this week after the memorandum by Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, setting out the options to the Prime Minister, was leaked.

The leak was one of the most comprehensive disclosures of Cabinet discussions in recent years. In the memorandum, Sir George disclosed that the Cabinet had agreed to privatise the Underground at the meeting held at Chequers to consider plans for the manifesto.

"We agreed that we should announce our intention to privatise London Underground at an early date. You may like to make the announcement, perhaps at one of your prime ministerial press conferences."

"Alternatively, I could do so, perhaps next week, to link in with the privatisation theme

which EDCP (Cabinet committee on co-ordination and presentation of policy) has recommended.

"I would be grateful for your views and those of the business managers [whips] on handling, particularly on whether we should volunteer a parliamentary statement."

"I believe that we should aim to move quickly in order to maximise the impact of the public announcement."

Sir George said he had subsequently met William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, over his concerns that it would be difficult "to sell to the public". Sir George said: "I believe that he is now content with my proposals ... The issue of fares was 'arguably the most damaging area of criticism during the railway privatisation,'" he added.

"I believe that, as a minimum, we need to give a commitment to no real increase in average fares for at least the first four years after privatisation."

Mr Blair said Labour planned to keep ownership of the Underground in the public sector, whilst allowing more private sector involvement, from refurbishing stations to laying new track. "Across the whole range of London Underground's activities there is scope to bring in private-sector capital and skills," he said.

"There could be new design, renew and operate" schemes where the private sector would refurbish and maintain the tracks and tunnels. Train manufacturers could be contracted to provide trains to meet the service level set and run by London Underground itself.

"It would mean we could make a start on improving the underground within months of the election of a new Government." Mr Blair's speech was delivered to a business and transport conference organised by the Industry Forum, the party's consultative body given the task of forging closer ties with the business community.

Civil servants angry at sell-off

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

Civil Service unions are to mount a legal challenge against an attempt by ministers to push through the privatisation of the Paymaster General's Office before the general election.

The PGO, which performs a variety of administrative tasks for the Government including running the pensions system for nearly all 500,000 civil servants and 1 million other public-sector workers, is due to be sold off in the next few weeks in an extremely tight timetable.

The schedule only allowed four weeks – including the Christmas period – for the checking of the accounts by the three companies which have been shortlisted. Bids were due in last month and the Government is committed to a sale on 1 April.

Graham Corbett, of the Civ-

il and Public Services Association, said: "The timetable for this is extremely tight and there is only one reason why they are in such a hurry: they want to get it away before the general election ... There is going to be no time for consultation once the preferred bidder is chosen and therefore we feel we have a good chance of mounting a successful challenge in the High Court."

The unions fear job losses among the 642 staff, most of whom are based in Crawley, West Sussex.

Shortlisted are Capita, formerly led by Michael Heseltine's adviser Alan Kemp; EDS, the American computer software giant embroiled in a row over their plans to merge the Inland Revenue and Department of Social Security databases, who are bidding with Hogg Robinson; and a management buy-out team bidding with Tnet.

New blow to ban on handguns

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Plans to clamp down on gun ownership after the Dunblane massacre suffered a new setback last night as the shooting lobby inflicted its second defeat in a month on ministers.

The Government must now try to reverse changes to its Firearms (Amendment) Bill in the House of Commons.

The Bill aims to ban all high-calibre handguns and to restrict lower calibre 22 pistols to secure gun clubs. However, the pro-shooting lobby has been working hard to water them down.

Last night, peers backed by 153 votes to 139 a backbench Tory amendment that would allow owners of 22s to keep their weapons at home provided that the working parts were kept separately at secure gun

clubs. Last month they voted for compensation to be paid to gun clubs that are forced to close by the Bill.

On that occasion 86 Tories voted against the Government, and only 79 for. The fresh defeat came despite the fact that 40 Labour peers supported the Government.

Baroness Blatch, Minister of State at the Home Office, said the proposed "disassembly" of weapons would be unworkable. Later, a Home Office spokesman said the Government would not allow the amendments to remain.

"It is one of the main principles of the Bill that higher calibre handguns should be prohibited and that no handguns should be kept at home," he said. Labour's home affairs spokesman, Doug Hoyle, also said the changes should be overturned.

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Wirral confounds media snobs

As the political focus sharpens on Wirral South, Anthony Bevin looks at prospects for the coming by-election



House calls: The Labour candidate Ben Chapman getting out and about in Wirral South yesterday

Photograph: David Rose

Parts of the Wirral South constituency are so well heeled that Conservative cabinet ministers have tended to campaign there to lessen the cultural shock of a visit to one of the country's most deprived regions.

There is an awful southern snobbery in some of the media coverage of the Wirral South by-election, with reporters who should know better showing surprise that there is affluence, as well as industrial effluent, on Merseyside.

Unemployment in Heswall, one of the five wards which make up the constituency and which overlooks the delightful Dee estuary and the mountains of North Wales, was only 4.7 per cent in December. In other words, Clatterbridge, it was just nudging over 5 per cent. But they sit uncomfortably cheek by jowl with places that are steeped in the most abject poverty.

Unemployment in Bidston, at the northern end of the peninsula, was 25.9 per cent in December, with more than four out of 10 men out of work. In the Bromborough ward, 17 per cent of men were out of work, and in the other two wards of the constituency, Bebington and Eastham, male unemployment topped 10 per cent.

It is against that background that the European Union has included the Wirral in the Objective One status – the highest rating for regional aid and assistance. According to the local council: "Wirral is the only metropolitan borough in the UK to have its own office in Brussels" – it knows where its bread is buttered.

The local Labour briefing notes say: "Wirral South is a

predominantly prosperous seat containing some of Merseyside's most desirable commuter suburbs. 63 per cent of housing is detached whilst 60 per cent of its working population are A or B grades; 45 per cent of households have two or more cars."

The perception of Wirral South wealth is also highlighted by the strong local presence of the Unilever Group, and the delightful industrial village of Port Sunlight, built for Lever's soap workers in 1888. Vauxhall and Shell also have large-scale

local investment. But the politics of the people of Merseyside has been swinging left for many years. Before he died last year, Wirral South's Conservative MP Barry Porter, told friends of his concern that Labour-voting commuters were moving into his patch and threatening his majority.

The area that once returned Selwyn Lloyd, Geoffrey Howe and Linda Chalker to the House of Commons seems to be slipping fast.

The Labour vote in the 1983 general election was 23.7 per cent of votes cast in Wirral South; in 1987, it was 28 per cent; and in 1992, it moved up to 34.6 per cent. In last year's local elections, Labour polled 37.5 per cent in Wirral South wards – just 0.8 percentage points ahead of the Tories.

Nevertheless, it is highly likely that if Labour wins the seat in a 27 February by-election, it will return to the Tories in a general election. In the meantime, however, the one issue that the

Conservatives are clutching at in the hope of saving themselves in the by-election is education. Visiting the constituency yesterday, Brian Mawhinney, the Tory chairman, again warned of

the threat to local grammar schools from a party led by people who wanted choice and selection for their own children while wanting to deny it to the children of others. There are

seven secondary schools in Wirral South, and only two of them are grammar. It is entirely possible that the parental ballot promised by a Labour government would get rid of them.

PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

SCORING THE EXCHANGES

John Major
3/10

The exchange today was a no-contest; the issue of head-teachers' qualifications, and the differences in emphasis between the Education Minister and the Prime Minister is either a slow-burner or a no-burner.

Tony Blair
3/10

Unless Blair has a grand plan for which Major's answer yesterday laid the foundation, he did nothing worthy of many points. But, as last week, he did at least allow more backbenchers the chance to speak.

BLAIR'S ATTACK

Labour has plans for a compulsory 'national competence qualification' for head-teachers. Employment Secretary Clift Strachan indicated earlier yesterday that she was opposed to this, while Major appeared not to have ruled the idea out. Blair's single question yesterday accused Major's assurance that indeed he had not. At best, this revealed a potential Conservative split. Not a particularly impressive session.

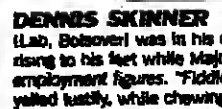
THEMES OF THE DAY

- Spending of Liberal Democrat and Labour local authorities (Andrew Row, C. Mid Kent)
- Unemployment figures (Greville Janner, Lab, Leicester West)
- Taxes on air travel (Dennis MacShane, Lab, Rotherham)
- Currency stability (Sir Peter Tapsell, C, Lindsey East)

GOOD DAY



BAD



DENIES SKINNER

Labour has plans for a compulsory 'national competence qualification' for head-teachers. Employment Secretary Clift Strachan indicated earlier yesterday that she was opposed to this, while Major appeared not to have ruled the idea out. Blair's single question yesterday accused Major's assurance that indeed he had not. At best, this revealed a potential Conservative split. Not a particularly impressive session.

WILLIAM POWELL

William Powell (C, Corby) took up time asking whether three days could be set aside to debate what he detected as Michael Meacher's instinct to raise taxes.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

Janner: "Has the Prime Minister seen the findings of the employment policy institute, which show that some four million people in this country are seeking work...?" Major simply quoted his own figures ("the reality") in reply.

THE QUIP OF THE DAY

Major: "My Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor has had from the Shadow Chancellor the most remarkable endorsement of his economic policies that any Chancellor has ever received. On every single tax decision, on every single spending decision, this year and next year, the Shadow Chancellor agrees that my Rt Hon Friend is infallible."

THE CREEP OF THE DAY

Laverick: Spent a long time asking Major to "congratulate a firm called Technic Holdings in my constituency". Many members found comic irony in the fact that the company specialises in re-breads for worn-out tyres.

Compiled by Ben Summers

Contrasting face of a key constituency

Unemployment (December '96): male 10.3 per cent; female 3.2 per cent; average 6.8 per cent.
Owner occupation: 81.2 per cent (national average 66.3 per cent)
Council housing: 11.3 per cent (national average 24.3 per cent)
Car ownership: 74.4 per cent (national average 66.6 per cent)
Over-40s: 49.8 per cent (national average 45.3 per cent)
Five or more GCSE passes (A-C) in 1996: Wirral Grammar School for Girls 97 per cent; Wirral Grammar School for Boys 94 per cent; Wirral Local Education Authority 44 per cent; England 45 per cent.
Job Centre offices (Bebington): part-time nursing care assistance £2.50 per hour; part-time cleaning/development assistance £3.50 per hour; professional/managerial jobs 46.1 per cent (national average 37 per cent).
Ethnic-minority population: 0.9 per cent.

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\$10,000-\$24,999	Annually	6.00	4.80	\$10,000-\$24,999	Annually	4.40	3.52
\$100-\$9,999	Annually	5.50	4.40	\$100-\$9,999	Annually	4.00	3.20
\$100,000 or more	Monthly	6.22**	4.98	\$100,000 or more	Monthly	4.60**	3.68
\$25,000-\$99,999	Monthly	6.17**	4.94	\$25,000-\$99,999	Monthly	4.51**	3.60
\$10,000-\$24,999	Monthly	5.84**	4.67	\$10,000-\$24,999	Monthly	4.31**	3.45
\$5,000-\$9,999	Monthly	5.37**	4.29	\$5,000-\$9,999	Monthly	3.93**	3.14
\$100,000 or more	Annually	6.40	5.12	\$25,000 or more	Annually	2.60	2.08
\$25,000-\$99,999	Annually	6.00	4.80	\$10,000-\$24,999	Annually	2.10	1.68
\$10,000-\$24,999	Annually	5.60	4.48	\$100-\$9,999	Annually	1.00	0.80
\$100-\$9,999	Annually	5.50	4.40	\$25,000 or more	Monthly	2.57**	2.06
\$100,000 or more	Monthly	6.22**	4.98	\$10,000-\$24,999	Monthly	2.08**	1.66
\$25,000-\$99,999	Monthly	5.84**	4.67	\$5,000-\$9,999	Monthly	0.99**	0.79
\$10,000-\$24,999	Monthly	5.46**	4.37				
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\$9,000				Annually	5.00% Tax-free		

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Five-year-olds to face tests on the three Rs

Children starting primary school in September will be tested during their first term on the three Rs and on skills such as tying their shoe laces, in the pilot year of national tests for five-year-olds.

Schools across the country were yesterday invited to participate in the scheme, which will prepare the ground for compulsory national assessment at five from September 1998. The programme will slot the last piece into the Government's testing jigsaw, which already includes national tests for pupils at seven, 11 and 14.

Announcing the pilot scheme yesterday, Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, said the new "baseline assessments" would help primary schools to identify children's learning

But although she stressed the importance of gauging the

success of schools in "adding value", Mrs Shephard refused to rule out future publication of league tables of national test results for seven-year-olds.

She said: "Certainly it would be my desire to be as open as possible about the measurement of the output of the education system, so that would be a longer-term aim."

Teachers have resisted school performance tables – already in use for GCSE and A-levels and being published for the first time for primary schools next month – on the grounds that they offer bald results without revealing the distance travelled by pupils. Ministers have no plans at present to publish tables for five-year-olds.

Consultation of schools and parents by the Government's curriculum advisers revealed widespread support for baseline assessment, which is also supported by Labour.

However, parents were keen that children's oral skills and personal and social develop-

ment should be given more emphasis. Draft examples of the assessments issued by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, developed after trials in 360 schools, include sums using pictures of buttons, sound-recognition exercises using pictures, such as cars and birds, and tests on identifying written numbers. Children will also be assessed on practical and personal skills, such as washing hands and ability to share in a group.

However, unlike the national tests for older children, baseline assessments will not be identical across the country. Local schemes, already used by half of all primary schools, will be permitted. But they will have to meet strict criteria in a national framework, now going out for final consultation.

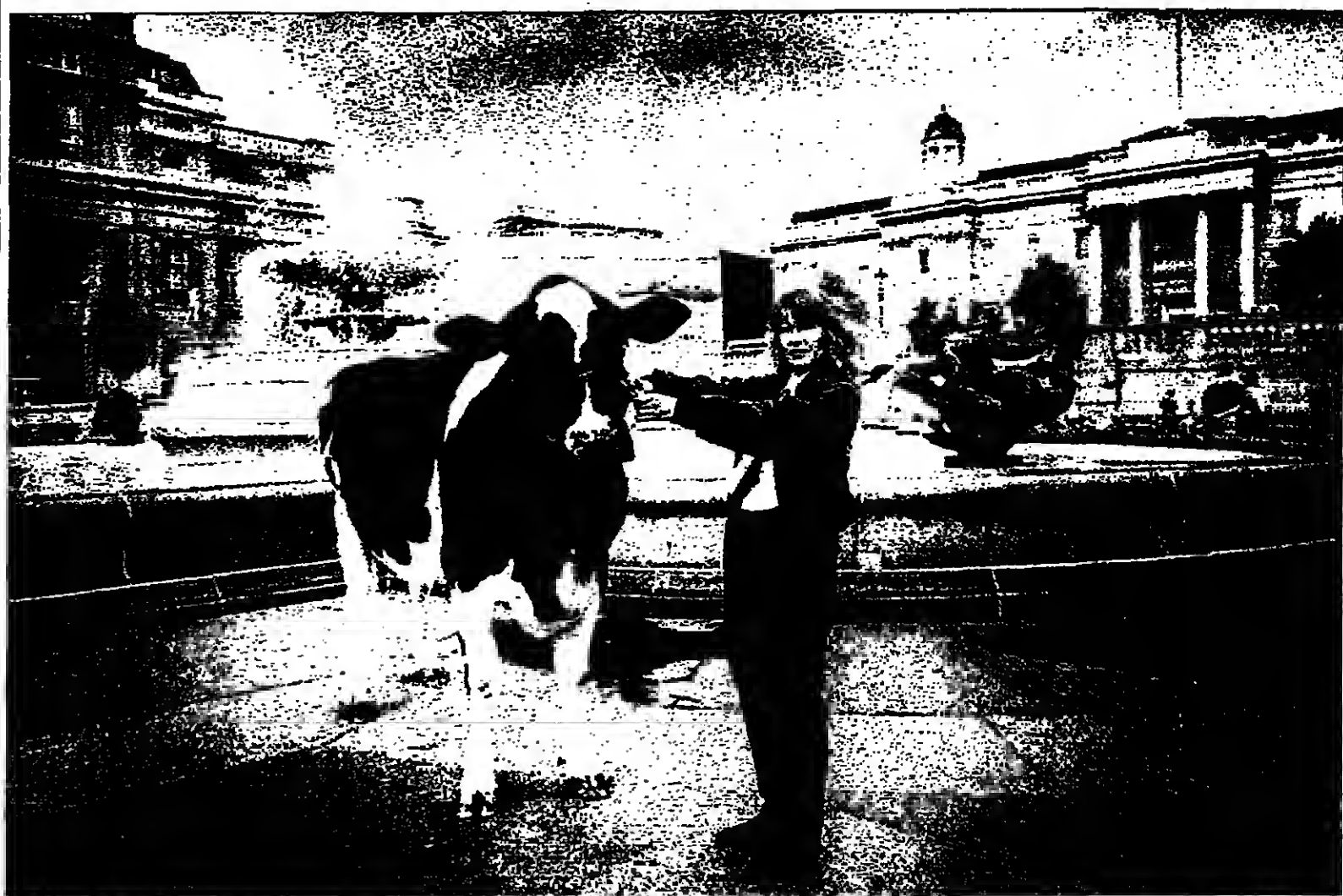
Announcing the pilot year yesterday, Mrs. Shephard predicted that a uniform, nationwide testing scheme would eventually emerge, but added: "We should not de-skill, or devalue, the perfectly good schemes already existing."

The assessments, expected to take no more than 20 minutes per child, should not overburden teachers with extra work, she said. The Government will provide £8.5m to fund training and support of teachers in carrying out the tests, to be completed within a child's first term at primary school, after around seven weeks. Schools will be expected to involve parents closely, and will pass on results confidentially, in the form of a score for each element or an overall result.

The tests are also intended to help schools identify children with special educational needs and assess those for whom English is a second language.

The National Union of Teachers yesterday raised concerns over the decision to record test results in number form. The union also called for the £8.5m funding to be devolved to schools to pay for supply cover during the assessments.

A capital day trip for a Friesian called Flo



Hoofing it: Prize-winning Friesian cow Flo – full name Cardeland Eclipse Flo – seeing the sights in Trafalgar Square yesterday during a visit to the capital with Sue Cope, daughter of the farmer who owns Flo. Her father Tom and his brother Andy are selling off the herd from their farm in Lichfield, Staffordshire, and the inclusion of Flo – a two-time supreme champion – is expected to ensure a large turnout at the auction on 6 May. Photograph: PA

Woodhead's list reveals top schools

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, yesterday commended the following educational establishments for offering good education. All the 63 secondary schools have re-

received outstanding inspection reports and some have had excellent GCSE results over a number of years. Others are improving in difficult circum-

SECONDARY SCHOOLS: Anderson High School, Manchester; Bishop Challoner Secondary School, Basingstoke; Brims and Cotterill High School, Calne; Grammar School, Lincro; Cardinal Langley RC High School, Rochdale; Cardinal Newman RC School and Community College, Coventry; Curriton High School, Pontefract; Doncaster Magna Community School.

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Major lays down gauntlet for his enterprise culture

Prime Minister renews attack on social chapter

Sarah Helm
Brussels

Entering the lion's den, John Major last night chose Brussels as the venue for a fierce attack on the European "social model", proclaiming Britain as the "enterprise capital" of Europe. Mr Major attacked the social chapter as a "Trojan Horse", congratulating himself on his refusal to sign the legislation at Maastricht. "The British Government has made up its mind. Our enterprise economy is not negotiable," he said.

At the same time, Mr Major condemned those who described Britain as a "sweat-shop economy", accusing them of us-

ing "overblown language". Britain has created 900,000 new jobs in the past four years, he said.

The Prime Minister insisted it was in Britain's interest to see Europe succeed. But, he argued, it could only do so if it accepted lessons from Britain's "enterprise model".

"I believe Britain can help shape a Europe in which business can prosper. We are willing to play that role. It is in our interest to do so - and in Europe's interest as well."

Mr Major's Brussels visit was his first trip to the capital for nearly two years, and was staged as part of the Government's drive to take its message on Europe "to Europe".

The speech, to European businessmen, invited by the right-wing European Policy Forum, focused solely on issue of competitiveness and job creation, avoiding the more contentious subjects of monetary union or European reform.

Seeking to persuade Europeans that Britain's attitude to Europe is not all negative, the Prime Minister argued that Europe should find a new goal, now that the European Union had ensured that war was no longer thinkable.

"Peace is the prize that the project of Europe has won," said Mr Major. Now Europe faced



Point of principle: Mr Major said in his Brussels speech that Europe can succeed, but only if it accepts lessons from Britain's economic model

a "new historic challenge - how to keep companies competitive and our people in work in the face of global competition. Prosperity - that aim which every politician shares - depends on winning in that world."

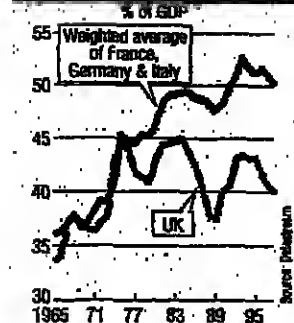
Mr Major then attacked his European partners for pursuing policies which create unemployment. Many countries are now having to make "Herculean efforts" to bring public spending under control, which Britain did long ago, he said.

European over-regulation is damaging growing industry, he said. "Over-regulation doesn't work. And, as a result, nor do millions of Europeans."

Focusing on the social chapter, Mr Major asked: "How is job creation helped by centralised, legally binding agreements between employers and trade unions? By mandatory works councils? Compulsory parental leave? What orders does that create? What orders does it win?"

The Prime Minister argued that Britain has carried out deregulation without threatening social provision or equal opportunity. He also insisted that claims that social legislation is necessary to protect workers from job insecurity is "simplistic and unrealistic".

Government outlay



Tirade seen as election propaganda

Brussels - John Major's Brussels speech received little attention in the continental press, and was unlikely to attract much interest in other European capitals, writes Sarah Helm.

His themes of job creation and deregulation are on the agenda of every member state, as governments battle with unemployment and welfare reform. Other European leaders admit that there are lessons to be learned from Britain about flexible labour markets and lowering social costs. Germany, in particular, is aware its high tax and social costs are deterring inward investment.

However, Mr Major's combative approach to European integration, and the growing frustration in Brussels with the "British problem", mean the Prime Minister's ability to influence his partners is at an all-time low.

The speech was viewed as domestic political propaganda, not an attempt to promote a positive European debate. More interest might have been sparked had Mr Major chosen to address monetary union or institutional reform.

Instead, the Prime Minister congratulated the Government on its success as the "enterprise capital" of Europe. But he did not say Britain comes ninth out of 15 in terms of productivity. Britain's good employment record, compared to Germany or France, can in large part be explained by the fact that Britain is now at a different stage of the economic cycle, say partners on the continent.

Other governments accept the value of Britain's flexible labour markets, but they point out that Britain's education and training standards for those in work are often lower.

Mr Major was widely viewed to have damaged his argument for radical deregulation by levelling a dishonest attack on the Social Chapter and its effect on European employment.

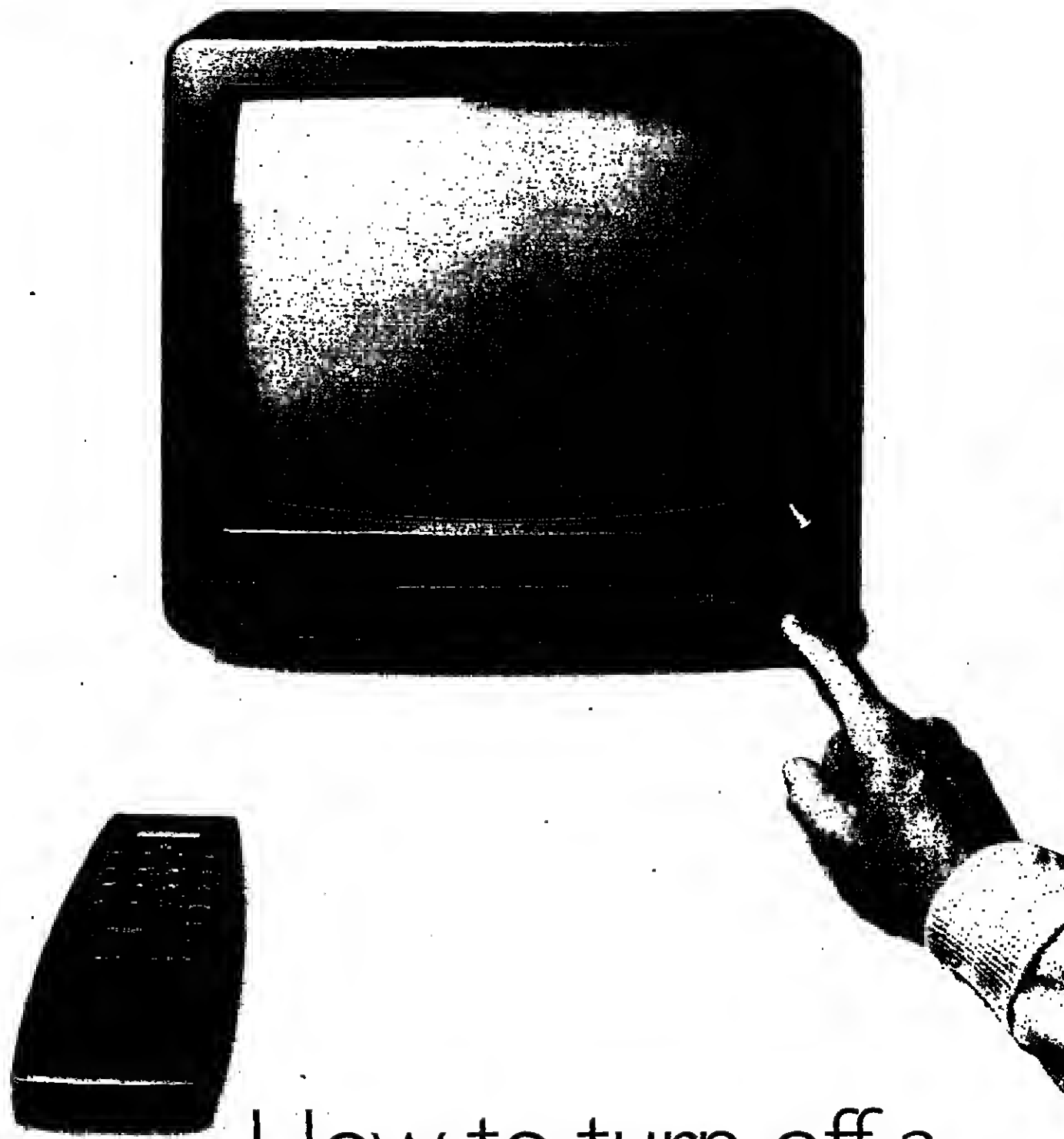
Legislation under the Social Chapter has been limited to new rules governing workers' councils and legislation on parental leave - hardly the job-destroying demons Mr Major claims.

"Mr Major's description of the Social Chapter bears no relation to what we know as the Social Chapter. Is he seriously saying the provisions we have introduced under the Social Chapter are the reason for Europe's 18 million unemployed?" asked one Commission official.

Neither the European Commission or the member states wish to bring in any major new changes under Social Chapter, recognising that industry and businesses could not bare the cost. The Commission has recently delayed the publication of a White Paper which would extend the 48-hour maximum working week rules.

In his speech, Mr Major insists that Britain has succeeded because it has avoided the "European social model". But other member states are not following the British model of total deregulation. The Dutch, in particular, believe good social provision helps stimulate economic activity and prosperity.

Is he saying it is the reason for 18 million unemployed?



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There's not a lot of coffee in Brazil this year

Prices will rise as farmers are ground down, reports Phil Davison



Slim pickings: A soldier standing guard in case of theft from a coffee plantation in Central America. Like Brazil, the region anticipates a poor harvest. Photograph: AP

Bean counting

The leading coffee producers, in descending order, are: Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Mexico and Vietnam. The top consumers are: the US, Germany, Japan, France and Italy. Britain is sixth, consuming 2.42 million 60kg (132 pound) bags a year.

up prices," said another London-based expert. "It's not always easy to distinguish." On the sidelines of a meeting in Bali, Indonesia, this week of the 61-nation ICO, grouping producers and consumers, the organisation's Executive Director, Cebus Lodder, admitted to Reuters there was some confusion. "The fundamentals are not explaining price variations 100 per cent," he said. "The fundamentals of demand, supply and stocks, weather conditions... elements you use to analyse the market, they are not explaining price movement."

The answer may lie in the financial markets, where coffee is just another way to make money. "We've seen a lot of fund buying," said Mr Rosser. "People who maybe used to dealing in foreign exchange are now investing in coffee. That, in turn, has a snowball effect and attracts more funds."

Brace yourselves for a surge in the price of coffee. And you can blame it on Colombian cocaine producers, a plague of insects, Brazilian showers or financial speculators.

Experts predict your coffee break is about to cost you considerably more within the next few days as supermarkets stick higher price tags on coffee beans, both ground and instant. They are distinctly less clear about the reason.

What we do know is that the price that the big roasting corporations pay to producers has rocketed 40 per cent since December and is about to be reflected on your supermarket shelves. The Dutch company Douwe Egberts yesterday became the first of the major roasters to warn retailers of an impending increase. It said it would raise retail prices by about 7 per cent on average for a 250-gramme pack.

Why? Take your pick. One factor is certainly bad weather during the recent harvesting season in Central and South America - particularly the world's top two producers, Brazil and Colombia. It is likely to cut their exports and further reduce dwindling stocks in the consumer nations.

Then there are the reports of a pending strike by Colombia's coffee farmers. They are angered by the fact that the world price rise has not been passed on to them by their National Coffee Federation. The government has also refused their demands for debt relief.

Another strike threatened by Colombia's public workers next Tuesday could also disrupt supplies. Previous strikes, by port workers last month and truck drivers previously, led to panic buying by roasters and pushed up prices.

Colombia, whose coffee exports make up around one-quarter of the world total in dollar terms, considers its green coffee beans, of the arabica variety and known in the trade as

Colombia Milds, to be the best in the world. That, of course, would be considered sacrilege by the Jamaican growers of Blue Mountain coffee.

On his farm, the Hacienda La Colina in Pereira, Colombia, grower Fabio Zuluaga notes another problem. "An experienced coffee bean picker earns around twice the minimum wage during the September-November picking season," he said. "But the traditional pick-

ers can now earn five times that much by picking coca leaves for the narco-traffickers."

Coca leaf, the basis for cocaine, used to be grown mainly in Peru and Bolivia. To cut costs and beat drug-interdiction efforts, however, the big Colombian cocaine cartels now finance coca leaf growing in remote areas of Colombia, tempting coffee bean pickers away.

Like other Colombian grow-

ers, Mr Zuluaga has also been battling a plague of insects known as *broca*, barely visible to the human eye but deadly to the coffee bean. In the barn where he separates his beans according to quality, he has posted a warning placard which reads: "Don't leave ripe or over-ripe fruit near your coffee fields. It feeds the *broca*. Attack the *broca* before it destroys your harvest."

Neil Rosser, of London's

ED and F Man International tradehouse, says prices are also being affected by reports that Brazil's 1997 crop may be significantly below earlier estimates, following heavy rains last week. Some revised estimates speak of Brazilian production of only 18 million bags, compared with last year's already relatively low 27 million bags. A bag weighs 60kg or 132 pounds.

"Coffee prices don't always move in response to the basic

conditions, however," said Martin Wattam of the London-based International Coffee Organisation. "It's a highly unpredictable market. At present there's something of a shortfall in supply since the Association of Coffee Producing Countries is curtailing exports to bolster prices."

"Don't forget, when you talk about adverse weather and im-

Australia takes first steps towards vote for republic



Howard: Favours monarchy

Robert Mithen Sydney

A "people's convention" of a sort not seen in Australia for a century will be set up later this year to plan the constitutional transition to a republic. After debating republicanism for the past five years, Australians yesterday learned that concrete steps are to be taken to allow them a vote on

abolishing the Queen as head of state. Ironically, it was the monarchist Prime Minister, John Howard, who took the initiative.

Mr Howard told parliament in Canberra yesterday that a convention on constitutional change will be held in the capital in November or December. Half the delegates would be elected in a popular ballot and an "appropriate proportion" will be

Aborigines and young people. The rest will be appointed by the federal government.

If recent opinion polls are any guide, the convention may decide that there is enough support to move on to a referendum on replacing the Queen with an Australian president. If that happens, Australia may become a republic by 2000, or at least by 2001, the centenary of the federation.

The forthcoming convention echoes the conventions which were held in the 1890s to draw up the constitution, and which placed the British monarch at its head.

Mr Howard surprised everyone with his announcement. As leader of the Liberal-National coalition, Mr Howard has opposed republicanism. The opposition Labour Party has adopted a republic as official policy.

But several prominent Liberal MPs have since come out as republicans and an opinion poll in December showed for the first time that there was enough popular support to carry a referendum on the issue.

"It remains very much my view... that the existing constitution has worked very effectively and has played a very significant role in delivering stable government," Mr

Howard told parliament. Republicans argued that it was not a question of wholesale changes to the constitution, but simply one of making the head of state an Australian.

Malcolm Turnbull, a Sydney lawyer and merchant banker, who is chairman of the Australian Republican Movement, said yesterday: "Support has been growing but republicans are going to have to fight hard."

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Mental illness needs a broader treatment

"Mental illness" doesn't exist. No, that is not to recycle some fashionable Sixties nostrum. It is to say we use the phrase to cover a variety of quite different medical conditions responding to no single set of therapies.

Mental illness demands the attention of no one set of professionals. In seven years the schizophrenic Christopher Chinis was seen by four teaching hospitals, three local psychiatric services, one probation hostel, two prisons, five social services departments, one sheltered housing scheme and five bed-and-breakfast placements. Bad enough: but manic depression is as prevalent as schizophrenia; it is just less visible. Up to 30 per cent of those aged 80-plus suffer from dementia, while up to one in five young people suffers from some kind of severe mental problem or disorder. And most mentally ill people spend most of their lives in our midst, in "the community", albeit often out of sight.

All that is to make the point that there can never be a definitive national scheme or system for the treatment of mental illness or the care of the mentally ill. Much more can and should be done to co-ordinate the flow of funds into general health and social services budgets intended to provide for the mentally ill. The care of the mentally ill demonstrates a pathology of government in the UK - "deparliamentalism" and the refusal of professionals and spe-

cialised policy-makers to surrender turf.

Some of that professional rivalry is based on genuine differences of view. In some case histories, there is no single "right answer". What that implies is that the space for experimentation needs to be as broad as possible, so that we can all learn what works. That inevitably means a degree of administrative untidiness. The trick - and cases such as Chinis and Zito demonstrate the human cost of failure - is to preserve space for innovation while ensuring that needy people do not fall through it; to patch together the medical and social services agencies into a seamless whole.

So, community care is dead - long live community care! The high hopes of a decade and a half ago for closing the hospitals and accommodating the mentally ill down the street have evaporated. Realism has dawned. We probably now have too few beds in dedicated psychiatric units and hospitals. But we also know that what matters as much as bed numbers is throughput - that is to say, not allowing patients who do not need residential care to block beds.

Stephen Dorrell's Green Paper is the Whitehall equivalent of wailing a finger and sticking it in the air to see which way the wind is blowing. The Health Secretary's good intentions are out in doubt; a decent and serious man, as well as an ambitious one, he deserves credit for giving the care of the mentally ill his attention - there are few votes in it.



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He certainly deserves a more co-ordinated response than his shadow was prepared to give him yesterday. Chris Smith has fallen into the trap of reflex reactions to government announcements, always of a carping and critical nature. (Since Gordon Brown's announcement banning additional spending by Labour, Mr Smith really will have to start singing a more convincing tune than the archaic melody that says spend, spend, spend.)

The problem with the Green Paper yesterday was obvious on page one. It was signed by a single secretary of state - yet the core of the problem is that

responsibility has to be shared between the domains of government. It ought to have been co-written with the Environment, Employment and Social Security Secretaries as well as the Health Secretary. At least it should have recognised that lack of co-ordination at the centre is part of the reason why "community care" has not lived up to the expectations of struggling families, worried neighbours and angry health professionals. Government passes money to local authorities through a support grant manipulated by the Environment Department, which has too little contact with the

Department of Health. Some new arrangement is needed, perhaps a dedicated ministerial task force or a policy agency with a mission to deliver across departmental boundaries.

Those who present themselves to the state as mentally ill need a single and enduring reference in the system, a case worker who stays on the case - who persists. The mentally ill won't worry about whether they are being entered into a Care Programme (what the NHS offers the mentally ill) or receiving Managed Care (how local authority social services define things); what matters is that there is a path that can lead out of medical treatment into a Benefits Agency office and a housing association.

The Green Paper, hedging its bets, offers options for remaking the local commissioning agency for mental illness. One of them - the creation of new ad hoc authorities - is said to be a brainchild of Number 10. Whoever its author, it is a still-born solution. Such an agency would be a creature of central government, but provision for the mentally ill is predominantly a local service, depending as it does on variations in jobs, housing, demography and (not to be forgotten) public attitudes towards mentally ill neighbours.

This is a ferociously complicated subject, which requires sharper government thinking and clearer lines of communication. It is not a popular subject; you will hear few, if any, speeches about it

during the election campaign. But it is hugely important to tens of thousands of our fellow citizens and their families. "Mental illness" may not exist as a single category. But the pain, fear and confusion is widespread and under-discussed; and these sufferers have had a rotten deal from the rest of us.

Are we a nation of fibbers?

It has often been said that no people are quite so utterly private and so impossible for outsiders to understand as the English. These days, with the television-and-tabloid fashion for emotional exhibitionism, that might seem as out of date as John Major's summoning-up of Orwell's warm beer and cycling spinners - a Silent England of laconic villagers and pursed lips. We are not so sure, but nor, of course, is No 10. Mr Major and his colleagues still believe they can win the election, above all because they think that deep down, vast numbers of "don't knows" and apparent Labour supporters are really Tories. We shall see. But what would it mean for all that sampling and polling, those "shock reports" and phone surveys if it turned out that the English were not only private, but unabashed liars too?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Jailing asylum seekers flouts human rights

Sir: It is a sorry state of affairs when asylum-seekers in Rochester prison have to resort to a hunger strike to draw the attention of the public to the arbitrary and often prolonged detention of asylum-seekers.

Recent statements by Home Office Minister Ann Widdecombe have been inaccurate. First, she has contended that all decisions to detain asylum-seekers are subject to judicial process including appeal, but, in violation of international human rights standards, those detained may be held indefinitely, are not properly informed of the reasons for their detention and have no effective opportunity to challenge those reasons before a court.

Secondly, she has said that those asylum-seekers are detained because they have not convinced the Home Office of their claim to asylum. This implies that only rejected asylum-seekers are detained. A recent survey by Amnesty International demonstrated that in the vast majority of cases the decision to detain is taken when the individual is just entering the asylum process.

For some 10 years, Amnesty has repeatedly called on the Government to review its practice of arbitrarily detaining asylum-seekers whilst their claims are processed. While the majority of people seeking asylum in the UK are admitted temporarily, pending determination of their claim, there are more than 750 asylum-seekers detained at any one time on the authority of the immigration officer, under the powers of the Immigration Act 1971.

The UK is the only European Union country where asylum-seekers are held in detention for often lengthy periods of time with no effective legal remedy, their only "crime" being that they have applied for asylum.

JAN SHAW
Refugee Officer
Amnesty International
London EC1

Sir: Are Michael Howard and Ann Widdecombe acting in the national interest? Won't they be responsible if any of the "detainees" die?

During the Thirties my family came to this country from St Petersburg. They were escaping from the tyranny of the Soviet Union. Some of them worked in Germany on their way and had to escape a second time from the officialdom and terror of Nazi Germany.

They came here with nothing. Life was hard. They were happy and proud to become UK citizens. My uncle Mark was a successful barrister here until he was in his eighties. My father, Serge, worked in the BBC during the Second World War, monitoring Soviet and German war broadcasting. He often told me how lucky he was that people here were so decent and just.

MICHAEL WOLFF
London WC1

Hot tip
Sir: Joe Boswell (letter, 3 February) might save some trouble by emulating Lord Berners, who travelled on the train with a clinical thermometer. The frequent insertion of same under the tongue, and the subsequent anxious shaking down of the mercury, usually allowed him to travel alone.



School inspectors fail the test

Sir: You report (1 February) that fewer than 1 per cent of teachers "can't teach". In my experience of Ofsted as a parent, the inspector can't inspect, and the Ofsted questionnaire for parents doesn't ask the simplest and most obvious question.

I have two sons at Pimlico School. Three weeks ago I was at a well-attended meeting for parents held as part of the school's current Ofsted inspection. The inspector found it hard not to interject. As rapporteur he trivialised important points. His idea of structuring the meeting was to seek out criticism of the school - which generally wasn't forthcoming. In his manipulation of the parents' meeting, the inspector's approach echoes the questionnaire. This takes the form of 12 statements with which the respondent is invited to agree or disagree on a five-point scale. Not one refers to the performance of the school as a whole. Not one raises the simple issue: "The school is doing a good job. Agree or Disagree?"

The questionnaire design makes it impossible for respondents to acknowledge the obvious fact that schools don't operate in a vacuum. For example, at Pimlico as elsewhere, parents take views on the setting of homework in the light of what they know about the availability of textbooks and other resources. But the inspectorate seems to assume that parents are too dim to understand such qualifications.

Are Chris Woodhead and his inspectorate capable of listening? AUBREY NUNES
London SW2

Sir: In the light of statistics published about the number of incompetent teachers and under-achieving schools it would be interesting to know the percentage of incompetent Ofsted inspectors. Headteachers and school governors are powerless to challenge the findings of an Ofsted inspection. There is no authority to turn to if they have been unfairly treated.

It would be interesting to compare, if such an experiment were possible, the findings of two separate Ofsted teams inspecting the same school, in the same week.

MARGARET POWELL
Grimshy, Lincolnshire

Sir: While I am glad that education features so highly on the electoral agendas of both main parties, I remain uneasy concerning their ability to get to the heart of the problems that bedevil our schools.

Everyone blames the Sixties. However, there wasn't much wrong with the liberalism of that era; it wasn't "free expression" that started the rot; rather, mismanagement of the raising of the school-leaving age.

I belong to the last generation which had the option of leaving school at 15. I chose not to, but some of my less academic friends were persuaded to stay on by the promise of exciting vocational courses. The bait was tempting: a couple of rusty pre-war cars appeared outside the metalwork shop, and friends were assured that they would be given the chance to restore them, and even drive them round the playing field.

It may have happened once, but not thereafter. Stropky "fourth-year leavers" simply became unteachable "fifth-year leavers". When I started teaching in the mid-Seventies I was horrified to discover that they were all being forced through the same academic mill, regardless of aptitude. The old-style CSE, which had been quite properly conceived as the non-academic equivalent of the GCE, had come to be regarded (by schools and employers alike) as an inferior qualification.

Children who were once not expected to try for the glittering prizes of academia are now penalised for failing to win them, thus creating the false impression that standards are falling.

J E MULDOWNY
York

Pooh could have gone too
Sir: I went to boarding school, and, horrible though it was, I must disagree with Linda Fielding (letter, 31 January). Everybody had cuddly toys, and nobody was teased about it. My mother taught in residential schools, where teddy bears were on the beds of all the children, boys and girls alike. Linda Fielding has misread the ending of *The House at Pooh Corner*. The point was that Christopher realised that as he became older, and his time was going to be taken up with lessons, he was not going to be able to play with his teddy bear all the time.

So off they went together. But wherever they go, and whatever happens to them on the way, in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest a little boy and his bear will always be playing.

"An Enchanted Place" from *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928)
It may be a tragedy that little boys have to grow up, but it would be sadder still if they didn't!

PAMELA D PLAYLE-MITCHELL
Lancaster

Let turbines top city towers
Sir: The ideal site for wind turbines is neither in our National Parks nor out at sea ("Friends oppose blots on Wordsworth landscape", 3 February). It is on the roofs of high buildings in our cities.

Each building would sell the electricity it generated, to offset its own fuel bills. The only problem is one of safety: turbine blades occasionally break off in stormy weather. The solution is to fit them with restraining wires, so that when this happens they do not fall on to the streets below.

Imagine the scene: Canary Wharf Tower itself, all the skyscrapers in the Square Mile and the Barbican, the Shell building, the Millbank Tower, Centre Point even, all with propellers spinning round on top. Best of all would be a turbine atop each of Battersea Power Station's chimneys, restoring that grand building to its original use.

RUPERT LEE
London SW14

Oxford fights for green belt

Sir: Mr Gillard-Watson (letter, 31 January) says that the Oxford green belt has never been confirmed. In fact, the great majority of it has already been confirmed. His real argument appears to be with Oxford City Council, for having been unable to confirm the part of the green belt that lies within the City boundaries.

Oxford City Council has always supported the green belt. The council's first attempt at drawing up an inner boundary for the green belt was rejected following a public inquiry in the Sixties, as being too tightly drawn. A second attempt was similarly rejected in the Eighties. The council's third attempt in define the boundary in the Oxford Local Plan is currently going through the final adoption procedures. This should hopefully lead to confirmation of the remaining part of the green belt this summer.

STEF SPENCER
Chair, Planning Committee
Oxford City Council

Lost tribe

Sir: "The don't-know-doo't-much-care clan, who are stupider and worse informed than average" (Polly Townbe, "A much meaner tribe", 3 February). Whatever happened to the intelligent, open-minded and indeed independent, who find neither political "tribe" wholly attractive and are the natural readership of your fine newspaper?

PATRICK CHAMBERLAIN
Caterham, Surrey

Beethoven tops symphony league

Sir: Analysis of all symphonies performed during 1996 at London's Royal Albert, Royal Festival, Barbican and Queen Elizabeth Halls and at St John's, Smith Square, shows that Beethoven maintains his lead with 44, while Mahler is runner-up with 22 and one-fifth (Adagio from No 10). Mozart follows with 22 and Bruckner leaps in with 20. Shostakovich scores 18, Tchaikovsky 15 and Sibelius 13, including two Kullervos. Thanks to one movement of his *New World* symphony at an Ernest Read Children's Concert, Dvorak scores 11 and a quarter, pushing Haydn into ninth place with 11.

Brahms and Schubert tie with 10 each, but Brahms will do better in 1997, his centenary year. One strange omission: Beethoven's No 2 did not get a single performance.

DAVID CHESTERMAN
Chorleywood, Hertfordshire

Ships of state

Sir: Edward Heath is not the only former premier to whom a nautical simile has been applied ("After 46 years in Parliament, 'old Dreadnought' sets sail for one more battle with the young guns", 1 February). Gladstone, referring to Peel, said that "former prime ministers are like great rafts floating unattended in a harbour".

There are many who think that every harbour needs elderly vessels, whether seaworthy or derelict. They are picturesque, lend dignity and keep pilots alert.

JOHN MITCHELL
London SE13

Labour finally begins to choose its enemies

Robin Cook's assertion about the single currency – that he would favour British entry in 2002 if it was a success – is the most significant act of political positioning in the 1997 general election campaign so far. It is a shaping moment for New Labour.

As a provocation, it matches Gordon Brown's tax pledge. But it goes further in one key regard: it is a rare example of a clear view from the Opposition that contradicts, rather than confirms, the received wisdom of Britain's political and media establishment.

What effect will it have on Tony Blair's extraordinarily subtle and persistent wooing of Labour's old enemies in business and the press? New Labour's charm-troopers have ticked off Rupert Murdoch and Lord Rothermere something rotten, and stroked many of the tycoons who backed Margaret Thatcher, and then John Major in 1992, into a kind of dazed, purring acquiescence. Will these boys like what Cook has said?

I think not. Yes, both Blair and Major are committed to "wait and see" the single currency. Yes, neither would enter in the first wave – Major because his party would fall apart, Blair because the legislation for creating an independent Bank of England and so on would tie up New Labour's first government in knots for a couple of years, losing it vital momentum.

Nevertheless, there is now a significant gap between the parties. Both know that the key date for abolishing the pound for the euro is 2002. And, all things being equal, Labour is now clearly in favour. And the Tories (Kenneth Clarke and a few friends apart) aren't.

There are many ifs, buts and interesting arguments to be had on the way, but note that Labour is now committed in principle to a key policy which the Conservative establishment – what one could call the political-media complex – is overwhelmingly against, and regards as virtually treasonable. Those moguls whom Blair has wooed will be horrified. And indeed, within hours of Mr Cook's interview there was the sound of hissing from *The Sun* and rasping, throat-clearing unhappiness from *The Times*' sleeping dragons awake.

This is an important moment which ought to remind Labour of the limits of the possible in its rapprochement with the great powers in the land. There was always a limit, always a choice to be made. And it is a choice, about what kind of government Blair wants to lead.

In the post-socialist world, there are only conservative governments, which sustain big concentrations of power, and radical governments, which break them up on behalf of the public interest and the underdog. These concentrations can be overnight trade unions, monopolistic companies, supermarket cartels, EU institutions, officious quangos, or whatever. And it is perfectly possible for Tory governments to act radically, and Labour



Andrew Marr

Press tycoons will not like Robin Cook's willingness to join a single currency

ones to act conservatively. In this case, it would not be possible for New Labour to act radically if it was also obsessed with staying friends with all the interests and individuals it has been lobbying, and who have been lobbying it. A radical administration – unlike, perhaps, a party seeking power – has to make enemies. From the outside, it has been hard to tell whether Labour's charm offensive has been a brilliant pre-election guerrilla tactic lighting strikes deep into the enemy's intellectual territory – or the start of a bold attempt to reshape the political map. New Labour, New Establishment?

The nightmare would be a Labour government that took a cynical decision to be anti-radical, to make deals with the powerful vested interests (whether it was the BMA, News International or Thatcherite businessmen) in return for a quiet life and soothing support. Far-fetched? It isn't so far from the behaviour of, say, Paul Keating's Australian Labor administration.

No one knows whether the New Labour move is a feint or a fundamental shift. The dangers of being conservative are so much greater than the dangers of radicalism that I remain optimistic. A Labour administration which failed to challenge vested interests or assert a clear view of the public interest would, quite quickly, repel support.

So the mere fact that Cook was prepared to say something which was becoming politically unsayable was heartening. It suggested a refusal to be bullied. That doesn't mean that a Labour government could ignore business opinion – indeed, the politics of the single currency are partly about which business influence you think matters more, Toyota-style inward investors, or national newspapers. The only utterly destructive thing would be to take the country in a direction which subverted politics altogether. For Labour, as for the Tories, there are no easy answers. There are severe political problems with EMU which have led this newspaper to ask whether a single currency can be reconciled at all with a functioning democracy. On the other hand, the thought of Britain outside the EU's influential core is almost equally unappealing.

It might well be a country unable to attract inward investment; too weak to regulate its own markets; and too small to influence policy anywhere else. Its politicians would be, no doubt, bigger-looking, more colourful, snail figures on the national stage, free from the shadow of Brussels bureaucracy, loudly praised by the local press. But from a distance, they would look like irrelevant, squeaking midgets.

For our politicians today, the choice is not between national freedom and federal slavery; it is whether they prefer to share power with a cartel of European politicians or with a cartel of tycoons. I know which I'd prefer. And I think, and hope, that in his heart of hearts, Labour does too.

Asylum-seekers hunger for justice

by Polly Toynbee

Today marks exactly a year since the Government removed the right of most asylum-seekers to social security benefits. Meanwhile, 12 asylum-seekers of various nationalities continue their hunger strike inside Rochester jail, protesting at being detained without a hearing and at being imprisoned in harsh conditions.

The rights and wrongs of asylum are a muddy business. Even leading campaigners for refugee rights agree that the most fundamental principles of refugee status are murky. But first there are a few clear and easy principles.

There is currently a backlog of 56,000 cases awaiting adjudication, some 754 of them in prison. Those in detention have been put there on the authority of immigration officers alone, mainly for fear that they may abscond. Some stay locked up without a court hearing for more than two years – though the immigration service is notoriously bad at identifying the right potential absconders. The real injustice, as so often with our badly managed legal system, is delay in getting a judgment.

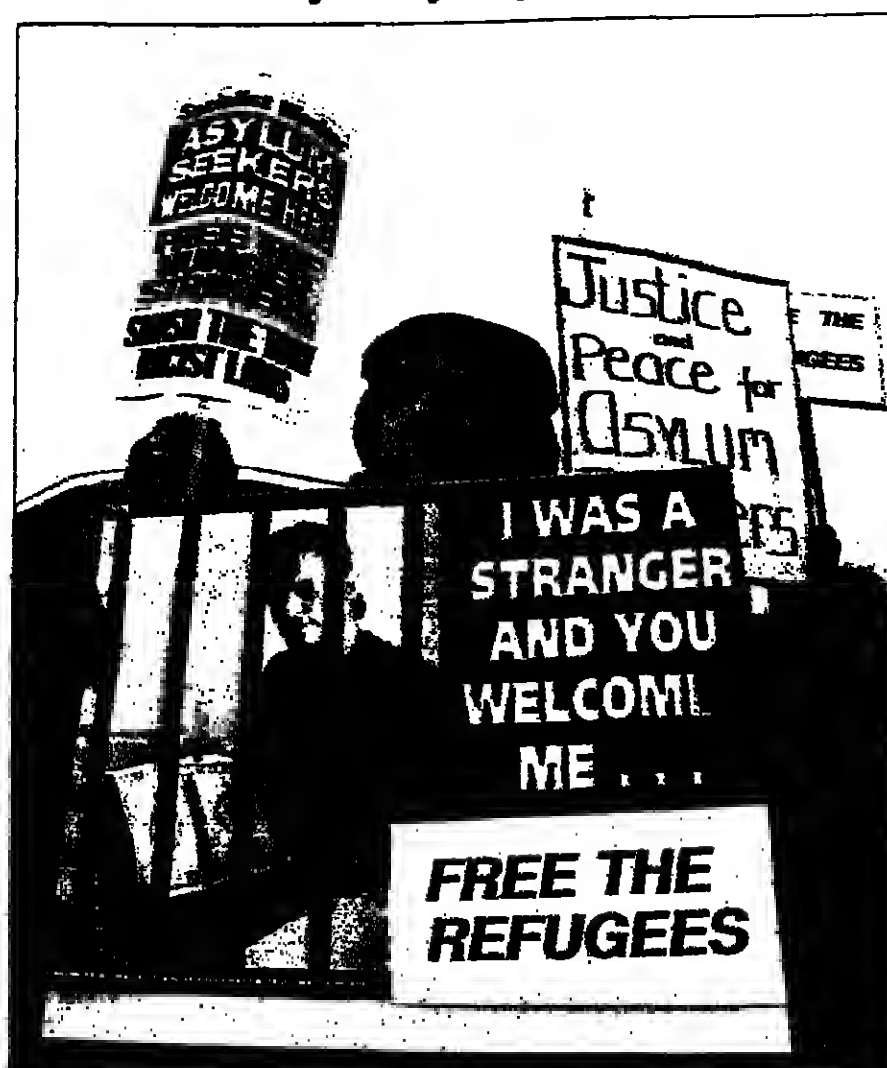
The hunger strikers and refugee campaigners want detainees to have a right to a judicial hearing within seven days of incarceration – in other words, the basic *habeas corpus* that is the bedrock right of any civilised nation. Not much to ask. As persons convicted of no crime, they also want the right to be held in special centres and not in prisons – another reasonable request.

However, instead of considering the merits of their cause, the Government has continued with its campaign of vilification against "bogus" asylum-seekers – of whom more later. Ann Widdecombe, prisons minister, was eager to tell the Commons that one of the hunger strikers is a convicted sex offender – as though that somehow answered their complaints. No one is suggesting that all asylum-seekers be released – only that their cases are reviewed by a judge so they can at least know why they are detained, and plead for bail. (Though to get bail, they need a British resident to put up £2,000 surety, and many know no one here.)

Implementing his benefit cuts for asylum-seekers has been yet another of Michael Howard's legal and administrative catastrophes. The new rules introduced exactly a year ago meant that 13,000 asylum-seekers lost any means of survival. However, the regulations were struck down by the Court of Appeal and Howard had to reincorporate them into his Asylum and Immigration Act in July.

Then the High Court told local authorities that they do have a duty, under the old National Assistance Act, to provide food, warmth and shelter to anyone destitute, including asylum-seekers. But legal advice has warned local authorities that they cannot legally provide them with any money – only with food and shelter. This has led to a truly bizarre situation.

In London, local authorities caring for about 2,500 destitute asylum-seekers have placed them in whatever vacancies



These are people convicted of no crime. Instead of considering the merits of their cause, the Government continues to vilify 'bogus' refugees

they could find in hotels around the capital. In any one DSS hotel there may be asylum-seekers belonging to many, far-flung boroughs. But because the boroughs are not allowed to offer money, they are obliged to deliver meals-on-wheels to each of their own refugees, often travelling miles across the city. So several different boroughs are sending daily prepared meals to the same hostel.

The Refugee Council runs a day centre in Vauxhall, but most of its users have literally not a penny. Some walk for four hours from Hounslow to get there, for lack of bus money. The Refugee Council today publishes a report on their plight and Nick Hardwick, the chief executive, says that he has

never seen people in such abject poverty. However, undeterred, the Government is pursuing its case in the courts, still determined to remove even this last obligation to feed and house them.

The Home Secretary boasts of the remarkable success of his tough new benefit rules, since thousands of asylum-seekers have been frightened away to more hospitable countries. In 1995 there were 43,965 applicants – but once the benefits were cut, numbers fell to 27,875 last year. The Government claims that this proves they must all have been "bogus". However, the genuine must also have been deterred from seeking asylum here, since the same proportion – some 20

per cent – have been granted asylum this year, although the numbers have halved (unless, of course, some unspoken quota system is at work).

But that brings us to the question – that no one answers satisfactorily. What exactly is a genuine case, and what is a bogus one? We signed the UN Convention which gives this definition: "A person with a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion". Since then some countries, including ours, have added a more general "humanitarian" clause.

But what does that mean? It does not mean the 3.3 million Hong Kong Chinese, yet they have every reason to fear rule under the Chinese – as have the 1 billion Chinese. What of Rwanda and other African countries? Half the world lives under vile regimes and in legitimate fear of persecution. He was an East European intellectual who wrote *sumistai* books, and we welcomed him to the British Museum reading room. The cold war gave us obvious enemies, and our enemy's enemy was our friend. But that world has gone, and it is far less clear which people we should take in from which country, in fear of their lives for exactly what reasons. One kind of death is much like another to the victim. To try to separate out the "bogus" from the "genuine" largely misses the point, though catching some blatant frauds may make us feel better about turning away so many in a genuinely perilous plight.

All of Europe, severally and combined, is tightening its borders, limiting its intake of refugees. Growing xenophobia in Germany and France is making the old tradition of welcoming victims of foreign despots harder to sell to the people. How many is the right number? That may be better negotiated across Europe, taking responsibilities together, as with the Bosnians, while offering humanitarian aid to ease the pressures that create great population flows.

But, however many or few, there will always be thousands we turn away. So the very least we can do in a wicked world is to treat them with absolute fairness, decency and justice while they are here. It will be a disgrace if any of these hunger strikers die while they are guests of Her Majesty: they are only demanding the most basic of civil rights.

A fashion label that really is to die for ...

Andrew Gumbel reports from Rome on the latest murderous twist in the fortunes of the Guccis

You'd never guess by looking at their shoes, would you? Those trademark Gucci moccasins look so safe, so conservative, so respectable. Lined up in the shop windows of high-class fashion parades or shown off in the foyer of La Scala, those elegantly finished alligator hides and bamboo-handled handbags are the very expression of comfortable affluence.

And yet it seems the venerable House of Gucci has generated a more troubling product to be remembered by: designer dysfunctionality. Two years ago the last family member to run the business, Maurizio Gucci, was gunned down by a professional hitman at his office in central Milan. Now it appears that the architect of his murder may have been none other than his ex-wife Patrizia, who was carted off to jail last Friday along with an extraordinary oddball crew of alleged accomplices including her personal medium and a hotel porter known for his interest in dabbling in the occult.

This is the kind of tale one expects from New York mafiosi, or maybe the new generation of *nouveaux riches* gangsters in Eastern Europe, but not from one of Italy's best-known dynasties. But then the Guccis have always been a bit different. The rows and family feuds were legendary long before Maurizio met his sticky end, as was the ruthlessness with which rival scions washed their dirty linen in public. One family ex-wife remarked that being married to a Gucci was worse than going to dinner with the Borgias. As recent events have proved, she was not exaggerating.

This is a family whose members have been known to resort to physical violence in company board meetings, and whose internecine struggles ultimately led to the business being sold out to a Bahraini consortium called Investcorp in 1993. One of Maurizio's cousins, Giorgio, once provoked a family schism by setting up a rival Gucci company; Giorgio's late



A woman with designs on her husband's life? Patrizia Reggiani, now under arrest in San Vittore prison

brother Paolo took a blunderbuss during the ensuing chaos by shopping most of his relatives, including his own father Aldo, to the US authorities for tax evasion.

The story of Maurizio's ex-wife and alleged assassin Patrizia Reggiani, née Martinelli, provides an insight into the decadence and vile emotions that have conspired to smash the Gucci reputation. She is a classic example of the poor girl made good – or, in her case, made rich beyond her wildest dreams – whose fascination with her new lifestyle made her selfish, vindictive and unfathomably crazy.

She owed her first encounter with serious wealth to her mother, who ditched her impoverished first husband in favour of an Italian transportation magnate called Fernando Reggiani. Patrizia managed to have herself adopted and included in Reggiani's will just before the old man died in 1973 – a manoeuvre her half-brother Vincenzo is convinced she accomplished through foul play.

The Reggiani social set soon netted her another catch, the highly eligible Maurizio Gucci who did not lack for

money or status but was not yet in an obvious position to take over the family firm. The couple had two children and then, with the help of Maurizio's father Rodolfo, set about claiming the Gucci succession. By the mid-1980s they had succeeded, scattering Maurizio's cousins to the four corners of the globe and booting chairman Aldo Gucci out of his office without even a chance to clear his desk.

All this was not enough for Patrizia, who felt excluded from many of Maurizio's power games and furious at the string of mistresses he insisted on parading around New York, Milan, Rome and St Moritz. Insisting that he prove his love for her, she forced him to buy a fabulous three-masted schooner he could not afford, the *Creole*, and then made him spend millions of dollars redecorating it.

Shortly afterwards she left him anyway, complaining that he was consumed by a "paranoid exultation of power". Over the next decade, she played the role of carping bitch, poisoning her children against their own father and complaining endlessly about the intolerably puny terms of

her divorce settlement. "How am I supposed to live with only three trillion lire in the bank, a house in Rome and one in New York?" she once lamented on an Italian chat show. "I do have two daughters to take care of, you know."

When Maurizio was murdered on March 27, 1995, her reaction was less than tender. "On a human level I'm sorry, but from a personal point of view I can't really say the same thing," she told reporters besieging her at her sumptuous home in Milan. Her first act on hearing the news was to beat a path round to Maurizio's house to ask his fiancée, Paola Franchi, for the return of a sweater belonging to her daughter Alessandra. The two women were seen studiously avoiding each other at the funeral, and have had nothing to do with each other since.

The key to the alleged conspiracy was Patrizia's friendship with a Neapolitan medium called Pina Auricemma, whom she had met years before on the island of Ischia and subsequently helped set up two unsuccessful Gucci shops in Naples. Auricemma, prosecutors say, put her in

touch with a Milan hotel porter called Ivano Savioni who in turn introduced her to two underworld types, Orazio Cicale and Benedetto Ceraulo, who allegedly acted as driver and gunman in the attack.

The plot appears to have unravelled in the past few months as the conspirators decided they wanted more money out of Patrizia – the initial fee is believed to have been 600 million lire, or around £250,000 – and she refused to give it to them. Prosecutors say they caught up with the gang as they were plotting another murder, this time of Patrizia herself. It seems Messrs Savioni, Cicale and Ceraulo were not as well-versed in the ways of the Milan underworld as they might have been, and they ended up blabbing much of their story to a police informant. Patrizia denies the charges and claims that although she repeatedly said she wanted her husband dead, the gang acted entirely of its own accord and came to her afterwards to demand money.

Patrizia's reaction to her arrest was stone-cold. "You've come because of my husband's murder, haven't you?" she murmured through the entry-phone to the policemen waiting below. She packed her things in a Gucci suitcase – what else? – and drove off to San Vittore prison in a flamboyant fur coat. "I wouldn't wear that in jail if I were you," the arresting officer advised her. She heeded his advice, and paid him to give her his unassuming trenchcoat instead.

Patrizia once remarked how the Guccis have followed the well-worn pattern of many family dynasties: the first generation builds, the second consolidates, and the third destroys. Sure enough, the company is now in outside hands, and the family is a basket case caught in the full glare of publicity. The Guccis may have been instrumental in their own destruction but one thing is clear from the past few days: Patrizia gave them more than just a helping hand.

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obituaries / gazette

Dorothy Mandelstam

Dorothy Mandelstam was sometimes called affectionately the Queen of Continence; and her life from her late forties was intertwined with the Continence Movement.

Working in a Cinderella branch of medicine where the general public and fellow professionals expected nothing but quiet warchalking of destitute and discarded old people, she took a single-minded interest in the causes, alleviation and management of incontinence – long a taboo subject.

Born Dorothy Hillier in 1923, she was evacuated from London during the Second World War to Llanelli in Wales, and billeted in a general practitioner's household, which must have encouraged her interest in medicine and led her to choose physiotherapy as a career. By good fortune she trained at King's College Hospital Physiotherapy School.

In those days physiotherapy was generally taught in an insular and enclosed atmosphere, in small schools attached to big medical teaching hospitals and the students were unexposed to anything outside the boho-house of hospital. King's was different. The Medical Director, Dr Frank Cooksey, was a pioneer medical rehabilitationist: helping disabled people

back to functional life in the community. With a further two years post-qualification, working at the Red Cross Rheumatism Clinic in Peckham Rye and at the Roffey Park Psychiatric Centre, Dorothy's interest was assured in the psyche as well as the soma of illness and disability.

Having come under the influence of the philosopher and educationist Frank Coles as a student, she decided on a social science diploma and enrolled at the London School of Economics from 1946 to 1948. She then worked in the Children's Department of the London County Council, assisting unmarried mothers and adoption processes. This she continued after her marriage in 1954 to a South African scientist, Joel Mandelstam, later the Ivaugh Professor of Microbiology at Oxford.

After the birth of her first child in 1956, she returned to part-time work as a physiotherapist in the Obstetrics Department of Edgeware General Hospital in north London; five years later, true to her principles, she courageously allowed her second delivery to be filmed, and used the film in her classes. Edgeware Hospital was also the home of a progressive department of geriatric medicine, and visitors were attracted

to it from many parts of the world. The Principal of the Guy's Hospital School of Physiotherapy, Elizabeth Tanner, requested the opportunity to work voluntarily with the geriatric unit: she wanted to test a hypothesis that the practice of suitable exercise could prevent many present-day illnesses.

Her paramount speculation related to the high incidence of incontinence in elderly women. Did it relate to childbirth and damage to the pelvic floor muscles and lack of re-education of these muscles to function optionally afterwards? A link-up between Tanner, in the geriatric unit, and Mandelstam, in the obstetric department, was easily arranged.

When Tanner left the hospital, Mandelstam moved half her allegiance to the department of geriatric medicine. At that time, the labels senile, lazy, or dirty were often applied to sufferers of incontinence. Little or no training was given to medical students and nurses' training was mainly directed to containment: the pad, mop and bucket approach.

The department had close ties with the Disabled Living Foundation (DLF), created by Lady Hamilton, who had long been at the forefront of a movement to encourage professional interest in the

demoralising subject of incontinence, underlining what a devastating effect it could have. When a vacancy occurred at the DLF in 1974, Mandelstam was appointed the first Incontinence Adviser to run the Incontinence Advisory Service (IAS).

The DLF's Annual General Reports from 1974 to 1992 record the speed with which the whole subject opened up. Through her contact with Edgeware Hospital, Mandelstam was already working with the Open University in the production of a module on incontinence. Initial permission was refused for a television programme to support the incontinence chapter – it "might upset viewers". Two years later, the response to just such a broadcast came in shoals of letters to the DLF begging for help. Its Incontinence Advisory Service soon became a focal point for obtaining or disseminating information and testing new ideas nationally and internationally.

One of Mandelstam's first acts, in 1976, had been to organise a competition to design an "Emergency Pack for Incontinence" to be carried by district nurses. Radio and press interviews followed, giving the valuable oxygen of publicity to the subject. A leaflet on incontinence was produced by the

Health Education Council in conjunction with the DLF – which they had refused to do before. In 1977, Marjorie Proops launched Mandelstam's first book, *Incontinence – a guide to the understanding and management of a very common complaint*; about a third of purchasers were professionals (in 1978 it went into a second edition). In the same year the Chief Nursing Officer recommended that a specialist advisory nurse be designated to every health district.

Mandelstam then compiled and edited a text book *Incontinence and its Management* (1980). In 1981, at a meeting at Bedford College, the Association for Continence Advisers was formed; it later became the Association for Continence Advice (ACA). Dorothy Mandelstam was appointed Chairman and remained so until 1990, when she was made an Honorary Life Member. By that time the ACA had 1000 members. In October 1996, the ACA Executive decided to call a bursary fund for tertiary education of its members the Dorothy Mandelstam Educational Award. This particular accolade gave her tremendous pleasure in her last weeks.

As a physiotherapist Mandelstam was consistently preaching the gospel of exercise

for maintenance of the muscles of the pelvic floor. The first course paying serious attention to the pelvic floor was validated in 1988 by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), on the Promotion of Continence and Management of Incontinence. This closed the circle for her. The group later changed its name to the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health and proposed the election of Mandelstam to the highest honour the CSP awards, a Fellowship, in 1992.

After 17 years of outstanding service, Dorothy Mandelstam retired from the DLF in 1992, and, due to financial constraints, the IAS was subsumed into other departments. Mandelstam had foreseen this possibility, and with so many new organisations related to continence springing up, she had gathered together a collection of enthusiastic professionals to brainstorm a pattern for the future. The great need appeared to be for an over-arching organisation (much as the DLF had been) to be a focal point and umbrella for all the small groups: the Continence Foundation, launched at the House of Commons in March 1992, with the potential of becoming an international resource centre.



Mandelstam: incontinence

Retirement was stranger than Dorothy Mandelstam had realised, although she had always maintained a life apart from work. She continued to play tennis twice a week and started to play the piano again – taking lessons and playing in a trio with two friends, a cellist and violinist. It was only during the past year that she discovered an occupation that really lit her up in the same way that incontinence had – the National Trust house, 2 Willow Road, the former home of the modernist architect Erno Goldfinger, where she trained as a guide and revelled in being able to enthuse the visitors she was showing round.

Monica Stewart

Dorothy Alma Hillier, physiotherapist: born London 5 November 1923; married 1954 Joel Mandelstam (marriage dissolved 1974; one son, one daughter); died London 8 December 1996.

Osvaldo Soriano

Osvaldo Soriano was the leading literary figure to come out of the military dictatorship in Argentina in the 1970s. From journalism and high-profile writing in *La Opinión*, he was forced into exile, and into fiction.

He had written fiction and been published before he fled to France, then Belgium, where he met his wife, and then Spain, after the March 1976 coup, but it was exile that forced him to be a novelist. Writing and soccer were his two great passions, and it is difficult to guess which had the edge on the other. In exile he wrote for *El País*, in Madrid, and *Le Figaro*, in Paris.

English readers know him through his novel *Funny Dirty Little War* published in translation by Nick Caistor in 1983. The book, an outrageously funny, and at the same time tragically, description of rival groups within Peronism vying for purity supremacy and trying to interpret the late General Juan Peron either as "revolutionary" or as a Third World leader, when he was neither. The novel was made into a film in Argentina in the mid-1980s and delighted the small English audiences that saw it at the ICA.

Soriano returned to Buenos Aires from exile just as soon as constitutional rule was restored, and joined the then newly launched *Página 12* newspaper, a left-of-centre daily which gathered among its contributors some of the talent that had worked on *La Opinión*. Soccer remained to the end his favourite topic in his columns.

His shirky bald patch above an impish grin and a trim beard made him a familiar figure at book fairs and a carefully chosen number of social events. It was a joke among friends and colleagues that any meeting needing his presence had to be held in late evening for he slept much of the day and worked through the night. In December 1995 he and 23 others founded an association of independent journalists, Periodistas, which had as its mission to campaign against restrictions against the press. But he seldom attended meetings, complaining that, at three in the afternoon, they were too early.

His novels not in English include a blistering sneer at the military in *Cuarenta días de invierno* ("Winter Quarters"), a post-military exploration of Argentina in *Una sombra Ya pronto serás* ("Soon You Will Be No More

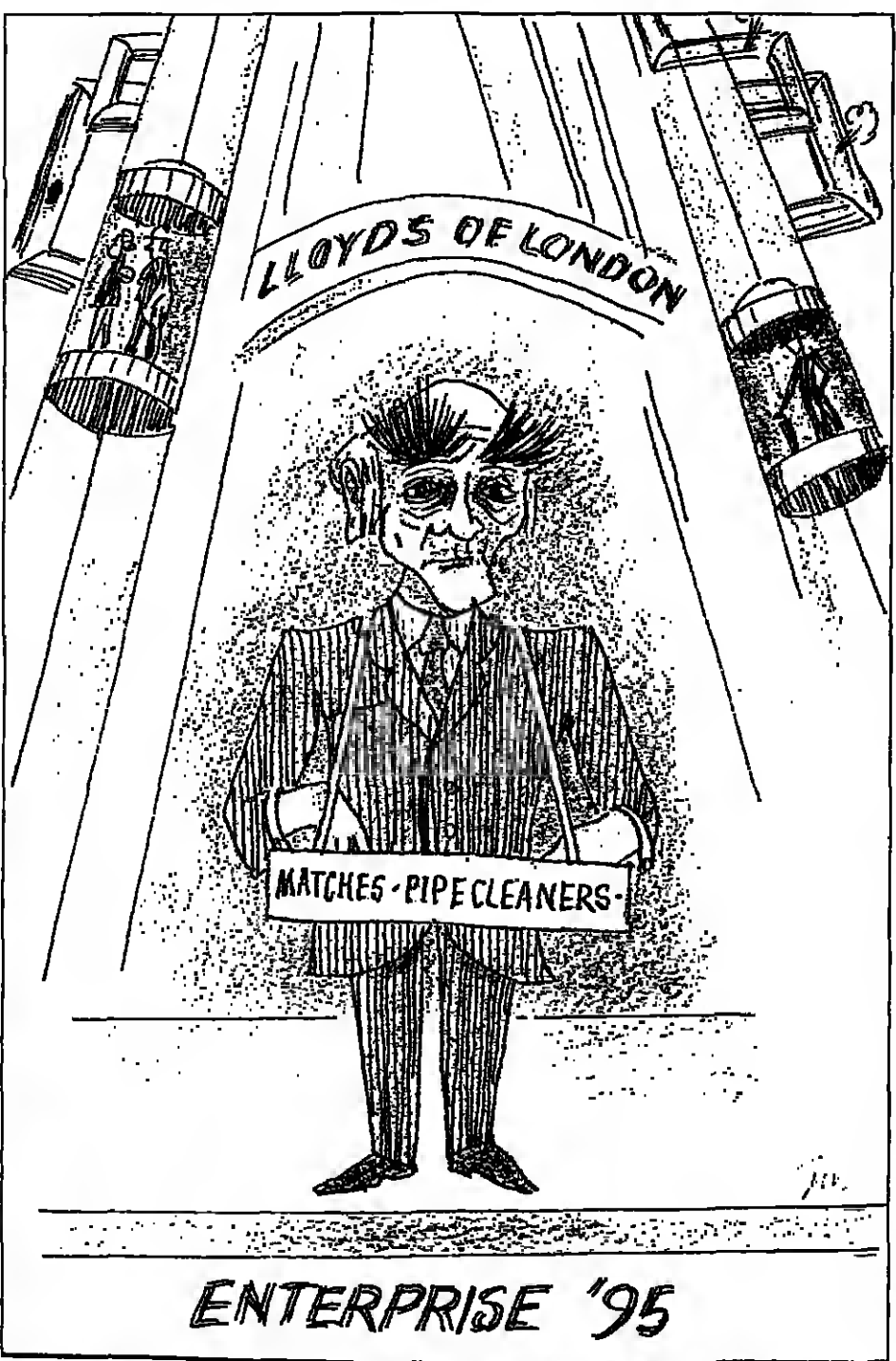


Soriano: "funny dirty little war"

than a Shadow", also filmed) and *Aus pies rendido un león* ("At His Feet a Lion Surrendered"), a line from Argentina's national anthem. All of these were set in post-dictatorship Argentina, showing a society struggling with its memories and trying to come to terms with half a century of authoritarian rule. His last two books broke with that line in *La hora sin sombra* ("The Hour Without Shade") and *Prates, Spooks and Dinosaurs*.

Andrew Graham-Yooll

Osvaldo Soriano, writer and journalist, born Mar del Plata, Argentina 1943; married 1978 Catherine Brucher (one son); died Buenos Aires 29 January 1997.



ENTERPRISE '95

When the writing's on the wall, don't forget to read the small print: Stacey by John Warner

Financial journalist, writer, entrepreneur and patron of the arts, Nicholas Stacey was as much at home amongst the great and the good at fashionable embassy receptions, the high-fliers in the world of finance and the political milieu of governmental committees, as he was with devotees of avant-garde music and the bohemians of the Chelsea Arts Club, which he frequented.

Easily recognised by his unstuffy but elegant suits and, above all, by his enormous bushy eyebrows, this handsome Magyar would invariably cut a swathe through even the most fashionable and prestigious of gatherings to become a centre of fascinating, often outrageously politically incorrect (never malicious), but always intelligent conversation.

Stacey was born in 1920 at Debrecen, Hungary and educated at the local Jesuit Gymnasium. At the age of 14 he entered the Academy of Commerce in Debrecen and, in 1939, came to England to study in the Faculty of Commerce at Birmingham University. Within weeks of arriving he was enlisted into the Warwickshire Civil Defence to become a driver for a surgical mobile bus unit, opening in the Birmingham region. He was very proud of the Defence Medal he received at the end of the war – "How's that for a bloody foreigner!", he would fondly remark.

In 1945 he joined the editorial staff of the *Financial Times* and became a specialist in such diverse subjects as Britain's waterways, canals and international trade. For five years, until 1951, he was assistant secretary and public relations officer at the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, where he also became editor of its journal, *Certified Accountant*.



Stacey: "peaceful" mergers

During this period he studied at the London School of Economics, joined the Fabian Society and, at the age of 26, became a member of the post-war reconstruction committee, working with such luminaries as Lord Kaldor, Sir Christopher Mayhew, Leonard Woolf and Christopher Saunders.

A Fulbright scholarship awarded in 1951 took Stacey to the Graduate Business School of Columbia University; there he researched the development of English accountancy and lectured on economic history. Thirty years later, he renewed his association with the Fulbright Commission when he became chairman of the Public Affairs Committee. During his seven years of chairmanship, to encourage the study of technology, he pioneered sponsorship and awards for short-term courses for young high-fliers in British industry.

After a year as assistant editor of *The Director*, Stacey joined the General Electric Company in 1955 as economic and marketing adviser. In conjunction with the Economist Research Unit, he invented and published the quarterly *GEC Export Guide* showing Britain's foreign trade performance in 38 markets.

In 1962 he was the founder chairman of Chesham Amalgamations and Investments, a pioneering UK merger and acquisitions company set up to assist in "peaceful" mergers and, in this respect, he and his colleagues played a small but significant role in the reorganisation of UK industry during the Sixties and Seventies. The company was unusual in dealing only with uncontested mergers, and so avoided the protracted battles that were often harmful to the companies involved.

When Chesham Amalgamations was sold in 1984, Stacey became chairman of the Cel-Sci Corporation, Virginia, a US company engaged in cancer and AIDS research; he instituted and financed research programmes at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London.

Nicholas Stacey was an intellectual, he was creative and innovative and the success and esteem he acquired in the world of business and finance was achieved by applying these talents – not so much to solve problems, as to discover possibilities. Unfortunately he was often outplayed by predatory asset strippers who were more concerned with large fees and higher dividends.

He believed passionately that business and industry should support the arts; equally, he believed artists should also be business-like – and not emulate the troglodytes he so aptly depicted in his book *Living in an Alibi Society: a catalogue of pretensions* (1989). In 1989 he became chairman of Trustees of the Society for the Promotion of New Music; he reconstructed the trust and successfully reorganised its financial structure. Under his chairmanship, the Byam Shaw School of Art became

London's most successful private art college. He was also a founder-trustee of the Bankside Gallery and council chairman of the Divertimenti string orchestra. Together with his wife, the flautist Marianne Ehrhardt, he organised regular concerts in London for the Ondine Ensemble – mostly performing music of the Belle Époque – and Platform, a musical charity created specifically to perform contemporary, experimental music by young composers.

Stacey had no patience with the woolly-minded and disliked those who assumed influence and power through unearned privilege, particularly in the cosy "old boy" network that enmeshed the business world. Inevitably he made enemies and in 1984 he lost a fortune when some erstwhile friends and business colleagues ganged up against him at Chesham to force a disastrous sale of shares.

Ebullent, optimistic and with élan, he soon overcame what he liked to describe as "a little local difficulty with the natives". Another favourite quote was "when the writing's on the wall, don't forget to read the small print". Unfortunately he must have left his reading glasses at home when the Lloyd's debacle began to unfold and as a "name" he lost more than his tailored shirt. Nevertheless his *jolie de vivre*, his sense of humour and enthusiasm for good conversation remained intact; Nicholas Stacey sought no alibis.

John Warner

Nicholas Anthony Howard Stacey (Stacey), journalist and businessman: born Debrecen, Hungary 5 December 1920; married 1954 Gloria Cooklin (marriage dissolved 1986); 1987 Marianne Ehrhardt; died London 19 January 1997.

Ronald Mason

May I add a footnote to John Tydemans' most evocative obituary of Ronald Mason [20 January?], writes Merlita Holland.

In 1989 one of the official

Westminster Abbey guides, tired of having to make apologies for the absence of my grandfather Oscar Wilde in Poets' Corner, wrote to Donald Sinden for help.

He in turn got in touch with Ronald, who by then was in retirement and already suffering quite badly from emphysema. Astonished, as he put it to me, by this per-

ceived slight on a fellow Irishman, he drew on many years of friendship with leading figures in the literary and theatrical world asking for their support in a proposal

to the Dean and Chapter. The Dean, Michael Mayne, a former Head of Religious Programmes and a colleague of Ronald's, was enthusiastic about including Wilde in the

newly commissioned south transept window in time for the centenary of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Without Ronald Mason's taking the initiative, despite

his ill-health, Wilde might still be waiting. The ceremony on 14 February 1995 drew the biggest Poets' Corner crowd since Byron's inclusion in the 1960s.

Andrew Graham-Yooll

Osvaldo Soriano, writer and journalist, born Mar del Plata, Argentina 1943; married 1978 Catherine Brucher (one son); died Buenos Aires 29 January 1997.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

RAINES, Anthony C. (Tony) FBA, Obit Obit, HM Obit Edinburgh, much-loved and loving husband of Patricia, died peacefully on 3 February in Loutham Nursing Home, Farnham. Funeral service on Tuesday 11 February at 2.30pm at Aldenham Crematorium. No flowers. Donations in his memory to the Bole Collection of Musical Instruments, Faculty of Music, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1DB.

GROVES, Andrew, tragically, on 30 January, aged 31. Actor, beloved son of Alan and Dorothy and very dear brother of Catherine and Peter. Funeral, Tuesday 11 February, at 11pm, at Christ Church, off High Street, Wandsworth, London SW11. All welcome. Family flowers only, but a collection will be made for Andrew's favourite charity. Enquiries to E&C Walters, 121 High Street, Wandsworth, London SW11, 0181-489 1636.

MCDONALD, On 31 January 1997, at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, William (Bill), aged 84 years, of Cambridge. Husband of Brenda, father of John and Carl. Funeral service at St John's Church, Hills Road, Cambridge, Wednesday 12 February, at 2.30pm. Flowers or donations, if desired, to the British Heart Foundation. Donations may be made at the service or to Thornhill Funeral Services, 51-53 St James Street, Kings Lynn.

Birthdays

Mr Jack Aspinwall MP, 64; Mr Robert Atkins MP, 51; Mr William Burroughs, novelist, 83; Mr Red Buttons, actor and comedian, 78; Mr George Simon Cooper, Master of HM Household, 61; Mr Ian Finlay, former chairman, Lloyd's, 79; Lord Gibson, former chairman, the National Trust, 81; Miss Susan Hill, novelist and playwright, 55; Professor Sir Alan Hodgkin, former Master, Trinity College, Cambridge, 83; The Hon Douglas Hogg MP, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 52; General Sir Geoffrey Howlett, chairman, Services Sound and Vision Corporation, 67; Mr Mark Jones, Director, National Museums of Scotland, 46; Mr Denis Kennedy, chairman, Honeywell, 62; Mr David Martin MP, 52; Sir Andrew Morritt, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 59; Mr Frank Muir, writer and broadcaster, 77; Professor Adam Neville, former Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Dundee University, 74; Miss Charlotte Rampling, actress, 51; The Very Rev Colin Semper, Canon

of Westminster, 59; Mr Michael Simpson-Orlebar, former ambassador to Mexico, 65; Mr Arthur Sulzberger, former chairman and publisher of the *New York Times*, 71; Sir Rodney Sweetnam, former orthopaedic surgeon to the Queen, 70; Mr David Turner, cricketer, 48; Sir Leslie Young, chairman, Lancashire Enterprises, 72.

Anniversaries

Births: Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Marquise de Sévigné, writer, 1626; Sir Robert Peel, statesman, 1788. Deaths: Thomas Carlyle, author and historian, 1881; Emerig Pressburger, film producer, 1988. On this day: the Spanish captured Minorca from the British, 1782; the Prince of Wales ("Prinny") was declared Prince Regent, 1811; the *Sunday Telegraph* was first published, 1961. Today is the Feast Day of St Adelaide of Bellich, St Agatha, St Avitus of Vienne, St Bertalaph or Bertoul of Renny, Saints Indractus and Dominica and St Voladus or Voel.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen visits the HM Obit Centre, Harrogate, North Yorkshire. The Prince of Wales, Patron, attends the launch of the British Heart Society's Jubilee Year at the British Heart Foundation, London NW1. The Duke of Gloucester, Patron, attends the launch of the British Heart Society's Jubilee Year at the British Heart Foundation, London NW1. The Duke of Gloucester, Patron, attends the launch of the British Heart Society's Jubilee Year at the British Heart Foundation, London NW1.

Changin' of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London SW1. The Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London SW1. The Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London SW1. The Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London SW1.

Turkish worker had right of residence while seeking work

Teitk v Land Berlin; European Court of Justice; 23 January 1997

A Turkish worker who had been legally employed for more than four years in a European Union member state enjoyed a right of residence in that state enabling him, if he decided voluntarily to leave his employment, to spend a reasonable period seeking new employment, provided he continued to be registered as belonging to that state's labour force and complied with the relevant requirements of its employment legislation.

The European Court of Justice so ruled on a reference by the German Bundesverwaltungsgericht in the case of Recep Teitk, a Turkish national. Mr Teitk had been legally employed as a seaman on various German ships, obtaining from the German authorities successive residence permits, each for a specified period and limited to employment in shipping. His last permit was valid until 4 August 1988 and stated that it would expire on cessation of his employment in German shipping.

On 20 July 1988, Mr Teitk left his job as a seaman. On 1 August, he moved to Berlin and applied for an unlimited residence permit for the purpose of engaging in gainful employment on land. That application was refused by the competent authorities of the Land Berlin. The legality of that decision was confirmed by the Verwaltungsgericht Berlin.

On Mr Teitk's appeal, the Bundesverwaltungsgericht referred the matter to the European Court of Justice for a ruling on the interpretation and effect on this case of article 6 of Decision No 1/80 of the Council of the EEC/Turkey Association.

The Council was established under the Agreement establishing an Association between the European Community and Turkey, signed at Ankara on 12 September 1963, and concluded on behalf of the Community by Council Decision

64/732/EEC of 23 December 1963.

According to that agreement, "the contracting parties agree to be guided by articles 48, 49 and 50 of the [EEC Treaty] for the purpose of progressively securing the freedom of movement for workers between them".

Decision No 1/80 did not give Turkish workers full freedom of movement within the Community but it did confer certain rights on Turkish workers in a member state which they had lawfully entered and in which they had been legally employed for a certain period.

The court had consistently held that the rights which article 6 of Decision No 1/80 conferred on a Turkish worker in regard to employment, necessarily implied the existence of a right of residence for the person concerned. Article 6 had direct effect in the member states and Turkish nationals who satisfied its conditions might

therefore rely on it before national courts.

The situation at issue in this case was that of a Turkish worker who, having been legally employed for almost eight years in a member state, enjoyed "free access . . . to any paid employment of his choice" in that state, pursuant to the third indent of article 6(1).

Under that provision he had not only the right to respond to a prior offer of employment but also the unconditional right to seek and take up any employment he chose, without any possibility of this being subject to priority for workers from the member states.

The court had already held, with regard to the free movement of workers who were nationals of member states, that article 48 of the EEC Treaty entailed the right for such workers to reside in another member state for the purpose of seeking employment there.

In accordance with the EEC/Turkey Agreement, the principles enshrined in the Treaty provisions on the free movement of workers who were nationals of member states must, so far as possible, inform the treatment of Turkish workers who enjoyed the rights conferred by Decision No 1/80.

In order to give full effect to article 6, a Turkish worker must, after at least four years of legal employment in a member state, be entitled to reside in that state for a reasonable period while seeking new employment, since his right of free access to any paid employment of his choice within the meaning of that provision would otherwise be deprived of substance.

It was for the national authorities or courts of the host member state to determine how long that reasonable period should be, but it must be sufficient not to jeopardise the Turkish worker's prospects of finding new employment.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

unit trusts

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-MARK
US	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58
Canada	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68
Japan	160.50	160.50	160.50	160.50	160.50	160.50	160.50
France	6.55	6.55	6.55	6.55	6.55	6.55	6.55
Germany	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36
Italy	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36
Spain	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36
Sweden	8.46	8.46	8.46	8.46	8.46	8.46	8.46
Switzerland	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48
Netherlands	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20
Belgium	36.36	36.36	36.36	36.36	36.36	36.36	36.36
Denmark	6.46	6.46	6.46	6.46	6.46	6.46	6.46
Australia	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58
New Zealand	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68
South Africa	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58
India	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50
Singapore	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Spot	Country	Spot
Argentina	1.58	Nigeria	1.58
Brazil	1.58	Pakistan	1.58
Chile	1.58	Philippines	1.58
Colombia	1.58	Portugal	1.58
Czech	1.58	Qatar	1.58
Dominican	1.58	Russia	1.58
Ecuador	1.58	South Africa	1.58
El Salvador	1.58	Taiwan	1.58
Guatemala	1.58	Thailand	1.58
Honduras	1.58	UK	1.58
Indonesia	1.58		

Tourist Rates

Country	Spot	Country	Spot
Australia	1.58	France	1.58
Canada	0.68	Germany	1.36
Japan	160.50	Italy	1.36
USA	1.58	Netherlands	2.20
		Spain	166.36
		Sweden	8.46
		Switzerland	1.48
		Denmark	6.46
		Australia	1.58
		New Zealand	0.68
		South Africa	1.58
		India	47.50
		Singapore	1.58

Interest Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
US	5.50%	France	5.50%
UK	5.50%	Germany	5.50%
Japan	5.50%	Italy	5.50%
Canada	5.50%	Netherlands	5.50%
Australia	5.50%	Spain	5.50%
New Zealand	5.50%	Sweden	5.50%
South Africa	5.50%	Switzerland	5.50%
India	5.50%	Denmark	5.50%
Singapore	5.50%	Australia	5.50%
		New Zealand	5.50%
		South Africa	5.50%
		India	5.50%
		Singapore	5.50%

Bond Yields

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
US	5.50%	France	5.50%
UK	5.50%	Germany	5.50%
Japan	5.50%	Italy	5.50%
Canada	5.50%	Netherlands	5.50%
Australia	5.50%	Spain	5.50%
New Zealand	5.50%	Sweden	5.50%
South Africa	5.50%	Switzerland	5.50%
India	5.50%	Denmark	5.50%
Singapore	5.50%	Australia	5.50%
		New Zealand	5.50%
		South Africa	5.50%
		India	5.50%
		Singapore	5.50%

Money Market Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
US	5.50%	France	5.50%
UK	5.50%	Germany	5.50%
Japan	5.50%	Italy	5.50%
Canada	5.50%	Netherlands	5.50%
Australia	5.50%	Spain	5.50%
New Zealand	5.50%	Sweden	5.50%
South Africa	5.50%	Switzerland	5.50%
India	5.50%	Denmark	5.50%
Singapore	5.50%	Australia	5.50%
		New Zealand	5.50%
		South Africa	5.50%
		India	5.50%
		Singapore	5.50%

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Est.Cnts traded	Open Interest
Long Oil	10.10	10.10	11-25	2736
German Govt Bd	101.79	102.14	101.72	230,677
Italian Bond	123.72	130.00	123.88	105,470
Japan Govt Bd	126.21	126.30	126.15	879
S 10th Striding	88.66	88.87	88.65	104,737

A retail family affair that could end in tears



COMMENT

It was the dream of Lord Weinstock and Lord Hanson to hand an empire on to a son, and an uncomfortable yolk it proved to be. Simon Wolfson may yet have cause to rue his famous father

...er, that's it.

The retail empire Next is famously economical when it comes to communicating with the outside world. So it proved once again yesterday after the above two-line announcement flashed bashfully on dealers' screens just after 8.30am to be followed by complete radio silence.

Hang on a minute, though, isn't there someone called Wolfson already running Next? Oh very well. Since you ask Lord (David) Wolfson of Sunningdale is the chairman. And is he by any chance related to Simon? You'll find they're father and son.

Sorry to push you on this but do you have a few more details about Simon? Such as? Well, such as his age, his business background, his retail experience and what qualifies him to help run a £2bn Footsie 100 company apart from an accident of birth? Mmmmm. We'll have to get back to you.

And get back, finally, they did in the person of the chief executive, David Jones, to reassure us that nepotism has no place at Next. Lord Wolfson had nothing to do with the appointment, having relinquished his executive responsibilities last August to go

off and take over Great Universal Stores from his cousin, Lord Wolfson of Marylebone. What's more, Simon may only be 29, but boy has he worked miracles for the company since he joined six years ago fresh from university. Just ask any analyst or shareholder who has met him.

Yesterday, they proved to be rather thin on the ground, Simon being as much an unknown quantity in the City as he was for most of the day to the Next publicity machine.

The appointment may not have been directly in Lord Wolfson's gift but his presence looms large at Next as one half of the duo that rescued it from the wreckage left behind by George Davies. It is hard to resist the conclusion that Next has decided, like father, like son.

It was the dream too of Lord Weinstock and Lord Hanson to hand an empire on to a son, and an uncomfortable yolk it proved to be. Simon Wolfson may yet have cause to rue his famous father.

A torrent of oil misinformation

The half dozen fuel managers who will decide Clyde Petroleum's fate face an unenviable challenge in separating fact from fiction in the torrent of misinformation and snide innuendo that both sides have produced in the run-up to yesterday's final 120p share

offer from Gulf. With so much transparent manipulation of data, the non-specialist investor has learnt to take both sides' arguments with a bucket of salt.

The old adage about damn lies and statistics has never been more true than in this tussle, with investors treated to the full panoply of arcane valuation methodologies and test-well data.

The spin doctors have had a field day too, with Gulf's acquisition in the market yesterday of 15 million Clyde shares paraded on the one hand as Clyde's shareholders throwing in the towel and on the other as a dismal failure of a dawn raid, no more than the shaking out of a handful of arbs. With Clyde's fate so finely balanced, there won't be any let up for the forked tongues for the next two weeks.

Clyde, whose directors sold shares just before the bid at around 80p, has plainly made some ambitious claims about its value, used some pretty heroic assumptions to get to figures as high as 160p a share and taken a rosy view of a hole in the North Sea bed that BP among others was happy to let go for a relative song.

Gulf and its advisers have been equally selective, however, and made some sweeping criticisms of Clyde's numbers on the basis of sketchy test data bought off the shelf from the DTL. In cases such as this, the share price is often the best guide but at 120p last night, bang on the offer price, it is as confused as the rest of us. If there is a white knight it is

well submerged, and if Schroders and PDFM, who own a third of the company between them, don't nibble the shares could soon be back below a pound. If a rival bid doesn't emerge by the end of the week, selling in the market seems the best option.

A tale of two rate-rise decisions

The amazing record of the US economy in achieving steady growth and low inflation for more than five years is often chalked up to the skill and judgement of one man, Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan. In the UK, too, the responsibility for steering the economy rests with just one person. By chance Kenneth Clarke and Mr Greenspan are both considering this week whether or not they will have to raise interest rates to counter future inflation. As the meeting today between the Chancellor and Eddie George draws to an end, the Fed's Open Market Committee will be starting its second day of deliberation.

Although on each side of the Atlantic one individual holds the reins, there could not be a greater contrast between the way monetary policy is set. For one thing, it is a fairly safe bet that UK base rates will not change after today's meeting. Everything the Chancellor has said recently points that way. In the US, on the other hand, there is real uncertainty about the outcome of the Fed's meeting. It

all depends on how Mr Greenspan reads the mixed signals on the economy.

Paradoxically, the near-certainty that UK rates will not move whereas US rates might rise reflects the fact the monetary policy in this country is far more arbitrary. Everybody knows that Mr Greenspan is an inflation hawk and that the Fed will exercise its independent judgement. If there is a true inflationary danger, it will tighten policy. The doubt is all about how the Chairman will interpret the data and how much the arguments of other members of the Open Market Committee will influence him.

On the other hand, the decision in the UK is opaque, taken entirely by Mr Clarke subject to persuasion from his political colleagues. The advice from his officials in the Treasury, never mind the advice of the Bank of England, is neither here nor there. No doubt many of the Chancellor's remarks, recorded in the published minutes of his meetings with Mr George, are made on the hoof and left to the Treasury to justify later.

With no restraints on his judgement, the nearness of the General Election, the strength of the pound and the mixed recent statistics will allow Mr Clarke to overturn the increasingly forthright advice of the Bank of England, if he wants to, for the fourth month running. The system of monetary meetings and published minutes is proving no match for a desperate Government. Chances are the Chancellor's choices will not be as scrupulous as Mr Greenspan's.

Power struggle may see Lazards run by committee

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

Michel David-Weill, the legendary financier who runs the Lazards investment banking empire, may set up a committee of three to five bankers to run the group rather than hand over power to a single individual. This could be one possible solution to the struggles over the succession that have seen Mr David-Weill fall out spectacularly with his dashing young son-in-law, the French banker Edouard Stern, until recently the favourite as heir apparent.

In an interview to be published next week in *Vanity Fair*, the US magazine, Mr David-Weill says the Lazards group, based in Paris, London and New York - has grown so big that he is now unsure it can be run by one man.

He says he is no longer certain that "the best structure in

the next generation is the same structure as today".

One possibility is to run Lazards through a group of bankers, one each in the three main centres and one or two others "not running offices, but with more ideas, more capital-minded," Mr David-Weill says. *Vanity Fair* is unlikely to be pleasant reading to Mr David-Weill. One source calls him a ruthless operator who "enjoys setting people up against each other".

He is also described by colleagues and acquaintances variously as charming, mean, cold and manipulative.

According to *Vanity Fair*, candidates for the new Lazards committee suggested by Mr David-Weill include David Verey, chairman of the London bank, Ken Wilson, the former Salomon Brothers banker who has an influential role in New York, and Steve Rattner.

It was Mr Rattner who had a very public falling out last year with his senior colleague Felix Rohatyn, the doyen of the Lazards New York office.

Mr Rohatyn described Mr Rattner, in remarks published in *New York* magazine, as a "mono-manical" social climber and went on to accuse him of leaking information, which he denied.

This spat between two senior men revealed to the banking world that life was far from harmonious at the top of Lazards, and that there might be a succession problem looming.

But the clearest indication of the difficulty came in a row last year between Mr David-Weill and Mr Stern, who is married to Mr David-Weill's daughter, Beatrice. The article nevertheless names Mr Stern as still among the candidates for the top at Lazards.

In his interview, Mr David-



Looking ahead, Michel David-Weill believes Lazards may have become too large to be run by one man

Weill denies French newspaper reports that he had a blazing row with Mr Stern, who announced he was quitting and was allegedly told by his father-in-law to go ahead and do it.

"We had a conversation about his future, which went very well. And then he told me

on the telephone, no fight at all, that for the time being he preferred concentrating on investments," Mr David-Weill says. *Vanity Fair* suggests the root of the argument is that Mr Stern threatened to leave if he was not put in control. But the problem for Mr David-Weill,

says the article, is that Mr Stern's abusive manner and his arrogance have "continually upset the fragile ecosystem at Lazards". Mr Stern is nevertheless still working in the Lazards group.

Mr David-Weill, 64, was the man behind the resurgence of

the family bank. He brought the London, Paris and New York arms of Lazards together again in 1984 for the first time since the war, through the purchase of half the London operation from Pearson. Since then, the group has outshone the rival family dynasty of Rothschild.

PepsiCo profits plunge on poor sales

David Osborne
New York

The woes of PepsiCo were underscored yesterday when the company revealed that profits plunged 85 per cent in the fourth quarter of last year due to its struggling restaurant division and poor results in international drink sales.

The dismal news further depressed the shares of PepsiCo, which for months have been eclipsed by the continued rise of its arch-rival, Coca-Cola. In morning trading in New York yesterday, PepsiCo shares were down 75 cents at \$33.375.

The company, based in Purchase, New York, reported that net income for the last three months of 1996 fell to \$28m (£17.3m), or 3c a share, compared with \$181m in 1995. It said that for all of 1996, profits slipped by 28 per cent to \$1.15bn.

The difficulties were traced in part to sluggish trade at two of PepsiCo's fast-food chains, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell. The news soured last month's announcement by PepsiCo that it planned to spin off its restaurant division which also includes Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The company was also hurt in the fourth quarter by disappointing international sales in its core beverage division, which includes its flagship Pepsi Cola drink. Outside the US, beverage sales were off by 9 per cent in the last quarter and by 2 per cent for the year as a whole. The campaign early last year to boost Pepsi sales through an extravagant changeover from red, white and blue cans to an all-blue colour scheme apparently made little impact.

PepsiCo suffered particularly badly in Latin America. Its worst performance was in Venezuela, where its long-time hot-selling product switched overnight to Coca-Cola.

The decline gives a further edge to Coca-Cola, which is already beating Pepsi hands down in the cola wars in almost every part of the world. In the US, however, the race is a little closer. Indeed, PepsiCo North America thrived last year, with sales growing by 4 per cent and profits by 14 per cent.

PepsiCo was also helped by North American sales of its Frito-Lay snacks brands. Overall sales for the group in North America grew by 5 per cent to \$30.26bn.

IN BRIEF

• **Beck Food Group**, whose chairman Morris Bond last year handed out £10,000 worth of prime Scottish beef outside the House of Commons to highlight the Government's inaction on the BSE crisis, has appointed Price Waterhouse as administrative receivers. The group blamed the collapse on the loss of a £20m contract to supply Tesco, resulting in 160 lay-offs at its Scottish plant. The receivers warned "significant redundancies" were likely. Beck employs 338 at a slaughterhouse and packing plant near Perth and 167 in a meat processing, storage and packing business at Boston, Lincolnshire. Beck Foods Smoked Salmon is not involved in the receivership.

• **Oil exploration activity** in the North Sea unexpectedly increased last year, ending a long period of decline which began in 1991. Consultants Wood Mackenzie's annual drilling survey today says 101 new wells were started in 1996, an 11 per cent increase on its previous forecasts and up from 83 in 1995. Overall, the level of exploration drilling slowed by almost a third as operators attempted to replace dwindling reserves. The group predicts that activity will increase slightly this year.

• **The Securities and Investments Board** warned investors of the pitfalls of doing business via the Internet. The City regulator said dealing with unauthorised firms over the Internet may deprive investors of the opportunity for redress or compensation should things go wrong. This is the first time the regulator has issued warnings via its website <http://www.sib.co.uk>. The SIB also warned about schemes that offer high rates of investment returns.

• **Bell Cablemedia**, the cable telephones and television operator in the process of joining the £5bn merger with Mercury, yesterday revealed that losses last year had almost doubled, from £47.4m to £95.7m, reflecting its £685m takeover of Videotron. The deal which paves the way for the creation of the new merged group, Cable & Wireless Communications, which also includes another cable company, Nynex CableComms. As a result of the Videotron deal, Bell's revenues also surged by 78 per cent to £76.9m, with the strongest growth in telephone income, which increased by 84 per cent to £43.4m. Excluding the impact of Videotron, Bell's residential telephone lines increased by 60 per cent, to 158,207. Including Videotron, cable television customers almost doubled, to 315,323.

• **The telephone watchdog, Ofcom**, has ordered British Telecom to offer to lease out its international private phone circuits to competitors at cost-based wholesale rates. The move, part of a wider examination of BT's wholesale charges for rivals which have to use its network to complete calls, is likely to give a further foothold to operators who "resell" capacity at bargain rates.

• **German industrial production** rose higher than expected in December. German government statistics showed that industrial output increased by 1.4 per cent in December 1996, after a 0.9 per cent increase in November - a total increase of 3.3 per cent since last year. However the initial output data for December is unreliable because of the long Christmas holiday. Most analysts expect the figures to be revised downwards, and believe that the economy is still much weaker than yesterday's statistics suggest.

• **Bass said it had completed** the merger of its Prague Brewery offshoot with two regional brewers, creating the Czech Republic's third-largest brewer. Combining Companies Osavara and Pivovary Vratislavice and Nisou with Prague Breweries will give the enlarged group a 14 per cent market share, Bass said.

• **Freemove Group**, a telephone-based ad group, is to raise £40m in an international public offering on the US Nasdaq market.

Veba search for partner signals split with C&W

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Veba, the German utility giant, yesterday gave its clearest indication yet of the split with Cable & Wireless over the terms of their Vebacom joint venture.

A spokeswoman for Veba confirmed that the group was looking for "a new international partner" in Vebacom and may buy out C&W's 45 per cent stake in the venture.

In a separate announcement C&W admitted it was discussing the future of its partnerships in Germany and the rest of Europe. "The discussions are continuing and a more detailed statement will be made in due course," a spokesman said.

Confirmation of the breakdown lifted C&W's shares by 15p to 479p, as investors breathed a sigh of relief that a potentially huge drain on the group's cash reserves could be over.

However, Veba discounted the idea that it was about to sell its 10.4 per cent stake in C&W, bought in December 1994 when Vebacom was formed, now worth £1.1bn. "C&W like to do

things in phases and selling that stake would cause a lot of turbulence," said one observer.

Earlier, more details had emerged of the rift between C&W, Veba and RWE, another German utility, which last October stunned observers by joining the Vebacom alliance.

RWE had previously been a partner in British Telecom's German alliance with Viag, the diversified industrial giant.

Separately yesterday BT and Viag said they had won the fourth digital mobile phone licence on offer from the German Government.

Senior sources close to C&W suggested that Vebacom, a relic of the Lord Young era at the group, had become an increasing liability as Dick Brown, the American who took over as chief executive last summer, sought to carve out a clearer European strategy. He has asked executives to judge each joint venture on the basis of whether it adds value to C&W's dominant European subsidiary, Mercury.

"What C&W does in Europe must benefit Mercury," said a source.

The "Brown doctrine" ex-

plains the recent frosty relations between the English and German sides in the partnership. RWE and C&W had yet to sign contracts to extend Vebacom, which would have seen C&W's share in the venture drop from 45 to 25 per cent.

There had been disagreements over the precise wording of the various agreement documents, drawn up in German and English.

A more fundamental rift was over RWE's insistence that it invest at least DM8bn (£3bn) over the next five years in a fixed phone network. BT's earlier relationship with RWE had fallen apart in considerable bitterness over exactly the same issue.

BT is thought to have been furious that RWE had apparently been privately negotiating to join Vebacom at the same time as developing the Viag alliance.

RWE's ambitions meant C&W faced the prospect of shouldering its share of losses in Vebacom for a long period, at the same time as completing its complex £5bn merger between Mercury and three UK cable companies.

The "Brown doctrine" ex-

Flat orders at odds with strong housing

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

There was confirmation yesterday of the health of the housing market and an early indication of a pick-up in wages in industry at the end of last year. But a separate survey of manufacturing industry showed that orders were nearly flat or falling in seven of the UK's 11 regions, although output fell in only three areas.

New house-building starts returned to their highest level for more than two years, having risen by a third in the year to the final quarter of 1996.

Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said: "Whether your home is a flat or a castle or somewhere in between, mortgage rates are low and affordability is excellent. The building industry is now sharing fully in the success of the economy."

Separately, the Engineering Employers Federation reported that pay settlements in the last quarter averaged just under 3.2 per cent, a fraction higher than the previous quarter but down from 3.6 per cent in the same period a year earlier.

However, the level of settle-

ments jumped from 3.11 per cent in November to 3.56 per cent in December. Most December settlements fell in the 2-4 per cent range, rather than 2-3 per cent as in the previous month. January will be a key month for pay, as it sets the largest number of deals each year.

The Confederation of British Industry and Business Statistics published its quarterly breakdown of industrial activity by region.

In the three months to December, companies in only four regions - the South-west, Wales, West Midlands and Northern Ireland - reported significant rises in orders. Manufacturers in the South-west were the only ones to report a significant rise in export orders.

Output fell in three regions, Northern Ireland, the North-west and the North. It grew most strongly in Wales, the South-west and the East Midlands.

Yet eight out of 11 regions showed an increase in business confidence compared with the previous quarter. Not surprisingly, businesses in the South-west were the most optimistic.

Bank changes way interest rates are set

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

The Bank of England will alter the way interest rates are set next month, but it intends to give the City's six discount houses up to two years to adapt to the new procedures, by introducing a package of transitional arrangements.

The discount houses, which are specialist banks, have had a monopoly in daily dealings with the Bank of England in the bill market, where interest rates are set.

But, as the Bank signalled last December, it intends to open up the market to a wider range of

financial institutions and also make use of the growth of gilt repos - debt backed by government bonds.

Jan Plenderleith, executive director of the Bank of England, said the measures "should help to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of the sterling money market in London".

The changes being implemented barely differ from those proposed in December despite the wide-ranging comments the Bank received from the markets about the plans.

"The main changes in December will be implemented as then proposed," Mr Plenderleith said. Some of the techni-

cal details had been "fine-tuned", he added.

From 3 March banks, building societies and securities firms which are active in gilt repos or bill markets will be able to take part in the daily money market operations provided they meet certain criteria.

Mr Plenderleith said the Bank had received applications from institutions wishing to become counter-parties and said that later this month the Bank would conduct "dress rehearsals" of the new procedures.

The Bank's daily money market operations are a closely watched ritual in the City as they

can signal changes to official interest rates.

Until now they have taken place at 9.45 am, noon and at 3 pm, with a late lending facility at 2.45 pm.

The new measures, published yesterday in a Bank of England paper, will see the daily operations take place at 9.45, noon and 2.30 pm, 10 minutes earlier than originally proposed.

A late repo facility, which the Bank originally proposed to offer at around 3.50 pm, will be made available between 3.50 and 3.55 pm, by which time settlement banks will have a clearer view of their liquidity positions.

SIB takes High Court action against firms

Jill Treanor

The High Court yesterday obtained agreements from two firms and two individuals not to undertake investment business in the UK. A third individual was ordered by the court not to conduct business.

The undertaking was given by David Rycott and his Anglo-Scandinavian SL, Christopher Tomaszewski and Alexander, an accountancy firm.

Anthony Lemon was ordered by the court not to undertake any investment business. The court action followed an

application by the Securities and Investments Board for an injunction against the five parties in respect of unauthorised investment business under sections 6 and 61 of the Financial Services Act.

If the five breach the interlocking judgment they will be in contempt of court and could be liable to a fine or imprisonment. They may contest the injunction via the civil courts.

According to a recent report Anglo-Scandinavian is a Spanish company which allows investors to speculate on the foreign exchange markets.

business

Stoves cooks up a storm as confidence returns

Stoves chief executive John Crathorne describes the trading performance of his cookers group as "more measured" compared with the frenetic activity of last year. That is something of an understatement. The switchback performance of the shares since their flotation at 163p in June 1995 came after initial euphoria was replaced by disappointment with the group's maiden figures for the first half of the 1995-96 year. A combination of rising raw materials prices, a hot summer and then a 60 per cent surge in demand meant Stoves struggled to cope. At the same time, a rising tax charge as the group's store of tax losses is used up has constrained earnings growth.

Mr Crathorne and his team have clearly found life as a public company a little more distracting than they expected. But after a 7p rise to 297.5p yesterday, investors have little to complain about in the shares' near-45 per cent outperformance against the rest of the market thus far and there is still plenty of life in the Stoves story.

Yesterday's 57 per cent leap in pre-tax profits to £2.37m in the six months to November came on the back of the first signs of revival in consumer confidence for years.

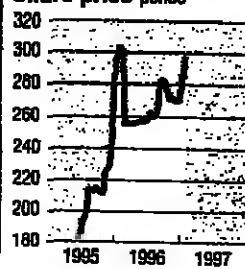
Stoves: at a glance

Market value: £75m, share price 297.5p

Trading record	94	95	96	95	96
Turnover (£m)	41.8	48.9	63.0	27.9	38.8
Pre-tax profits (£m)	1.52	3.01	4.28	1.51	2.37
Earnings per share (p)	7.1*	14.2	14.2	6.1	6.3
Dividends per share (p)	-	-	5.2	1.7	2.0

*Pro forma

Share price pence



Having risen by more than 4 per cent in 1996, Mr Crathorne is forecasting another 5 per cent increase in the next 12 months. With less than 5 per cent of Stoves' turnover going overseas, the group's heavy reliance on domestic sales should stand it in good stead in the future.

But that is the icing on the cake. The group has already proved its ability to take on international groups such as Electrolux, GEC and Whirlpool and beat them at their own game. It reckons it has raised its market share by around 2 percentage points to 18 per cent over the past 12 months, mostly through

growth in freestanding electric cookers, which saw a record number of product introductions. This produced a leaner margin mix, although operating returns on sales still advanced smartly from 5.5 to 6.1 per cent, boosted by the completion last summer of the group's change-over to its own revolutionary brand of production technology.

Mr Crathorne says the rate of new product launches means the group will never be short of ways to squeeze out further efficiencies. Longer term, the launch into Germany later this month with a new range of electric models, to be followed soon by a move into France,

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

will open up two markets which are together worth around four times that of the UK. Continental operations could take another two years to be contributing fully and Stoves may first need to use its minimal gearing to pick up a suitable brand name to tackle the notoriously xenophobic French market.

For this year, Kleinwort Benson, the group's own broker, is going for profits of £5.8m, rising to £7m next, putting the shares on a forward multiple of 19, dropping to 16. Hold on.

Sales slow down at Pace

With all the hullabaloo over digital television, Pace Micro Technology had been something of a go-go stock since it came to the stock market last year.

It was priced at 172p which gave it an opening price/earnings multiple of almost 30, pretty racy by any standards, but Pace took the rating

in its stride, rising to a hefty premium and then heading towards 250p.

Yesterday, however, the digital picture went decidedly fuzzy and the shares dived. The problems were two-fold. First the company's half-year results included a number of downbeat messages which had analysis cutting forecasts.

Second, there was no news on the potentially huge contract Pace is seeking to make set-top boxes for digital television.

The result was a 25 per cent slump in the share price to 169.5p, the first time that they have fallen below the issue price.

Although pre-tax profits in the six months to 30 November shot up from £400,000 to £10.2m, the market was more concerned by signs of a slowdown in sales.

Pace said that digital satellite receiver shipments were lower than in the previous half-year with slower-than-expected growth rates. This, together with the impact of the strength of sterling, had analysts cutting their forecasts from £26m to £20.5m for the full year.

On the set-top box contract, the City had been hoping for an announcement and some analysts feel that Pace needs to prove it can win contracts such as these against the likes of far larger companies like Philips and Nokia.

Even after yesterday's fall, the shares trade on a forward rating of 26. This reflects the possibility of the BSKB contract win. If you believe Pace can beat off the likes of Philips et al, yesterday's fall represents a good buying opportunity. It's a big if, however.

Ritblat rides the recovery

A string of acquisitions gave Conrad Ritblat a fillip in the six months to the end of November but growing investment income from the property portfolio was the main factor behind an impressive jump in profits. Turnover almost doubled to £13.9m as fee income rose by 82 per cent to £12.6m, but the 76 per cent jump in profits to £2.16m benefited from trebled investment income of £974,000. Considering that Colliers Erdman Lewis, acquired in January last year,

contributed roughly half the volume and half the profits on the consultancy side in the interim figures, the underlying performance of the original Conrad Ritblat business has been relatively pedestrian.

But fee income is directly linked to the prosperity of the commercial property market as a whole, and chief executive Philip Lewis detects a steady recovery in the prime retail, good-quality office and warehouse and distribution sectors, which is now spreading across the country.

Staff numbers have been cut by a further 5 per cent and the rationalisation of the group's West End offices is now complete, which places Conrad in a better position than many of its peers in what has been one of the hardest hit sub-sectors of the market during the recent slump.

A rise in the interim dividend of 20 per cent to 1.08p confirms the company's confidence that things are finally improving in commercial property but broker Pamure Gordon left its forecast earnings for the full year unchanged at 19.3p. At 273.5p, up another 4.5p on the day, the shares are still only half their best level three years ago but at close to net asset value it is hard to see much outperformance as long as the profession remains oversupplied and underworked.

Lawson adds his weight to an ad campaign

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Nigel Lawson, Lord Lawson of Blaby, is about to star in a £2m TV ad campaign for M&G PEPs, marking the 10th anniversary of his introduction of such tax-free schemes when he was Chancellor.

This is the first time the dieting expert and former editor of the FT has appeared in a television commercial. While PEPs have been a great success, attracting over £3.3bn from private investors since their launch in 1986, Lord Lawson is also famous for the Lawson Boom and subsequent Lawson Bust. Could this association damage the campaign?

"Not at all," says an M&G spokeswoman. "We are appealing to potential PEP investors, particularly in the 30-45 age bracket, using the Chancellor who introduced the scheme. People will think: 'If they've got Nigel Lawson, they must be big'."

The first ad goes out in the middle of the Channel Four news at 7.40 next Monday evening. The spokeswoman describes Lord Lawson's role:

"He's sat in huge room, there's lots of gravitas, he's a weighty character - ah, or not so weighty, as the case may be," she adds quickly, remembering Lord Lawson's recent, much publicised, decrease in volume.

policyholder, is going to vote for the Abbey National offer - £400m for ScotAm's good-will plus up to £1bn for embedded value.

Roman Cizdyn, insurance analyst at Merrill Lynch and another policyholder, is more sanguine. "I've seen the letter in the FT. I'm waiting for ScotAm to contact me - just like everyone else is."

As for Abbey National's £1.4bn offer, he says: "Let's see what's on the table first. There's no urgency."

Charles Lander, insurance analyst at SG Strauss Turnbull and also a ScotAm member, is more bullish. He describes the Abbey National offer as a "no-brainer" - un-



£33bn draw: Lord Lawson is about to become a TV star

less a better deal comes along, that is.

The launch of the Bank of England's new monthly journal, *Monetary and Financial Statistics*, has got off to a wobbly start. On the spine of "Volume 1 Issue 1" it describes the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street as the "Bank of England." I'm sure this abbreviation is a commendable effort by Eddie George to save paper.

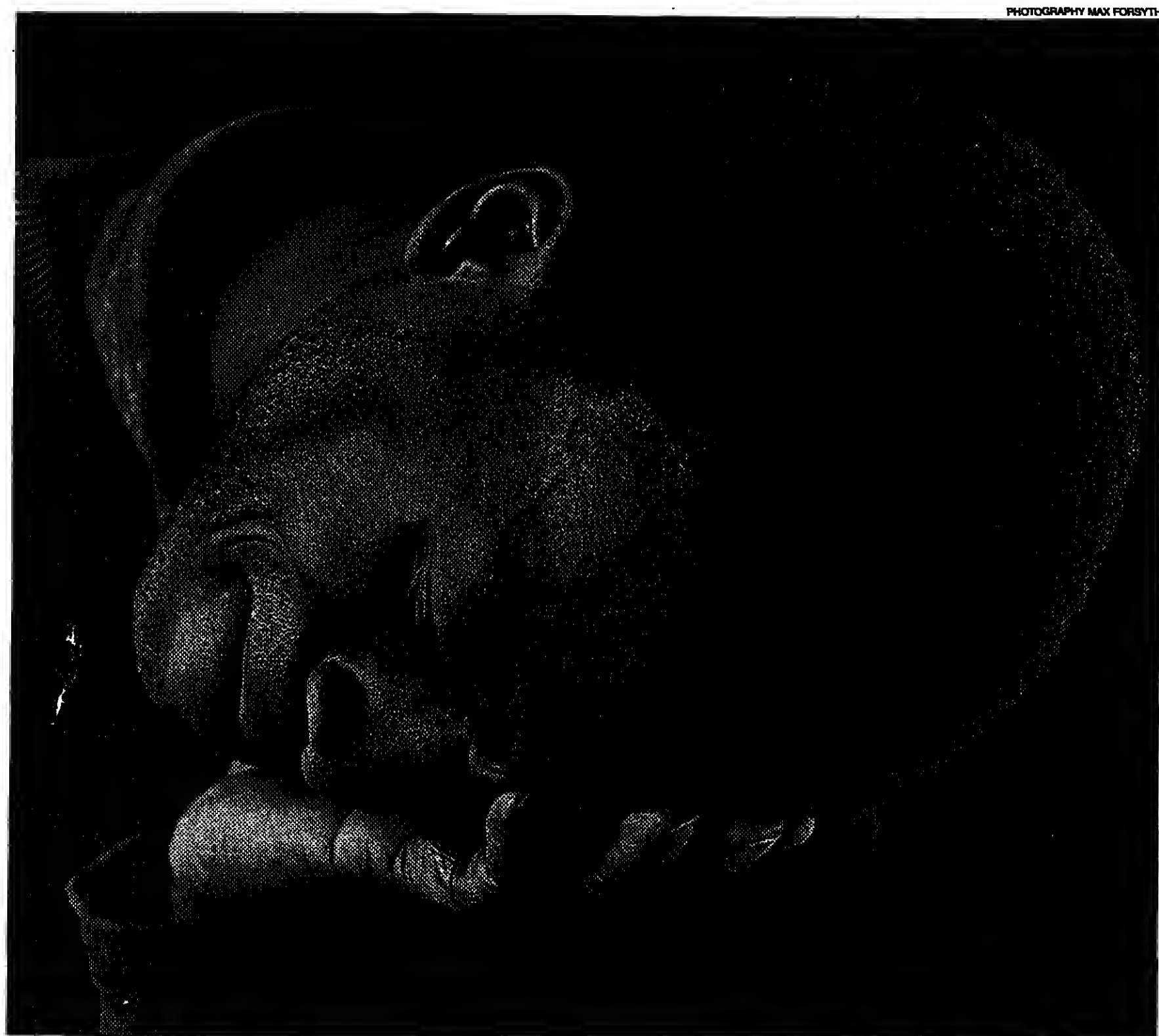
Gus O'Donnell, John Major's former press secretary, is leaving his job at the Treasury to become the head of economics at our Washington Embassy. Mr O'Donnell's job as deputy-director of macro-economic prospects is being filled by John Cunliffe, head of debt and reserves management. On being asked for a CV of Mr Cunliffe, a Treasury spokesman told me: "We don't have CVs for faceless bureaucrats like ourselves." I am delighted to hear from a fellow mandarin, however, that Mr Cunliffe is "quite highly regarded."

John Willcock

Company Results

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £m	EPS	Dividend
Adson Group (Q)	28.8m (22.5m)	2.78m (2.67m)	6.1p (5.88p)	3.5p (3.5p)
Active Imaging (Q)	4.2m (3.1m)	-3.8m (-522,000)	-24.6p (-4.0p)	nil
Conrad Ritblat (Q)	13.9m (7.2m)	1.35m (764,000)	6.8p (4.6p)	1.08p (4.6p)
Games Workshop (Q)	27.8m (18.5m)	4.8m (3.17m)	5.7p (8.6p)	2.8p (16.5p)
Staves (Q)	39.8m (27.9m)	2.37m (1.53m)	6.3p (6.1p)	2.0p (1.7p)

(Q) - Final (M) - Interim (FY) - Nine months



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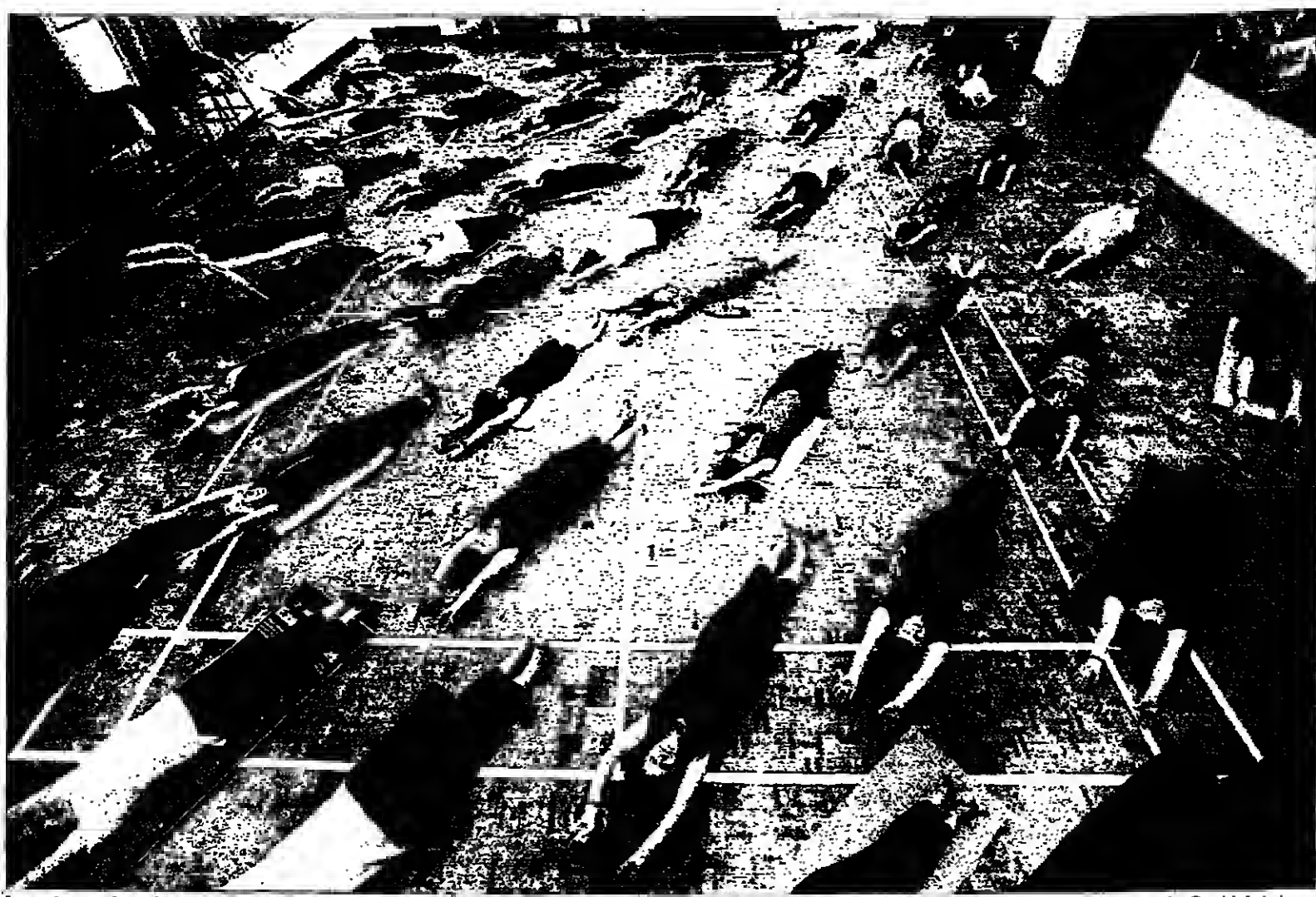
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KEITH ELLIOTT
at large

Welcome to the Independent Exercise Monitor, a unique opportunity to test your personal fitness at a glance...

Here's how it works. Award yourself five points for each of the following items in your home or office.

- a) Bullworker;
 - b) Step machine;
 - c) Video by Jane Fonda, Claudia Schiffer, Cher or similar (five points for each one, bonus five points for Barbie);
 - d) Video by the Green Goddess, Mr Motivator, Rosemary Conley or similar (five points for each one: lose five points for "Workout with Dawn French");
 - e) Exercise cycle;
 - f) Rowing machine;
 - g) Weights;
 - h) Home gym;
 - i) Waistline reducer (any sort, five points for each model).
- Add an extra 10 points for each one that you no longer use. Now award yourself five points if you have attended a health club or classes in aerobics, step aerobics, aquaerobics, anaerobics or jazz dance. Collect 10 extra points for each one that you have given up. Add up your total.



Long-term stretch: A Health and Beauty Exercise class in Leamington tones the parts that aerobics fails to reach

Photograph: David Ashdown

Congratulations if you have topped 50 points. You are a fat, lazy slth who still believes every advert claiming "Fitness in five minutes a month." If there is a new wonder exercise gadget, you are the sucker at the front of the queue. Think about it: if all those classes, videos and gizmos worked as they claimed, you would only need one. They are merely gimmicks for the gullible. Unless you are incredibly committed, nothing really works. Even those that do you good leave you feeling wrecked and smelling like a skunk on heat.

Well, that is what I thought until I gaterashed a Health and Beauty Exercise class. Yes, that's right: groups of women in black satin knickers and white blouses doing PE. But the outfits and music have changed, and the exercise regime that pre-dates aerobics by about 50 years is still going strong.

It was started in 1930 by the extraordinary Mary Bagot Stack, a suffragette who had a vision to enhance women's lives and improve their health at a time when there was no

health service for women. Her first class was in the YMCA premises in London's Regent Street, and she published her Women's League of Health and Beauty by marching down Oxford Street and giving a demonstration in Hyde Park.

The emphasis was on exercising the whole body, improving posture and flexibility. With classes costing just sixpence, the movement was a huge success. It spread to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. (It has added South Africa, the Netherlands and Zimbabwe since). By 1939, the League had 166,000 members.

It was never to achieve those dizzy heights again, though the League, by then a charity, continued to be popular - until the advent of aerobics.

Jenny Dingley, who teaches in the Leamington and Coventry area, recalls: "My numbers dropped by 50 per cent at that time. Unqualified people with enterprise were buying aerobics tapes and saying: 'I could run that class.' It really knocked us for six."

The League realised that it had

to adapt or die. Teachers were allowed to train part-time. Tapes replaced the traditional piano player (though about 10 per cent of classes still use a pianist). Popular music replaced "I'll Take You Home, Kathleen". Leotards replaced white blouses and black knickers. Even the name was changed to reflect a more modern image.

Today there are classes for children, the disabled, the elderly and even men (of which, more later). The League has high hopes it can play a key role in helping in the national curriculum for PE and dance in schools. Though it has shied away from advising on diet in the past, there are even plans for a promotion with Weight Watchers.

Amazingly, the changes have taken place without alienating long-standing members, some of whom have been attending for 40 years. Eileen Crook, 71, is typical. She has only skipped classes for good reasons, like two hip replacements. "I started coming 41 years ago when I lived in Kent, and when I moved to Leamington, I kept going. I still go twice

a week and call it my second religion. I like the fact that it's so welcoming and that the teachers are properly trained."

And now, all 400 teachers have gone through a 200-hour training procedure that retains many of Mary Bagot Stack's principles. It includes the theory of anatomy, physiology, body mechanics, choreography and composition, teaching practice, voice production and musical understanding. They have to attend two refresher courses a year, where professional choreographers introduce new routines and sequences to add interest. Many teachers, such as Jenny Dingley, go on to take further teaching and dance certificates.

Dingley, a dancer, saw a class when she was in her twenties and was captivated. "I decided I wanted to teach this." She has been doing so for 22 years. "What I like about it is that people get their exercise, but there is no rigid regime and the classes have an ambience. For a lot of people, it is the social side that keeps them coming year after year."

It is not all middle-aged women either. Anne Richardson has been attending for three years and has roped in her 21-year-old daughter, Claire. "I like the style of it. Aerobics is just for exercise, but this emphasises stretch, balance and poise too, and it's aimed at the whole body. I cycle, walk and tap-dance but I have become more mobile, and I have become surprised at how much fitter I have become. I come out not feeling exhausted but invigorated, both physically and mentally."

This is all starting to sound uncommittably like a plug for the League, but it is impossible not to be impressed by the enthusiasm, friendliness and that it looks like fun rather than punishment. Even women who are heavily overweight are not made to feel out of place. Many exercises are similar to those used by aerobics or dance classes, but there is an element of yoga, and everyone is barefoot (no trainers here, because the feet are exercised too). The work-out is altogether more gentle than aerobics and the music reflects this: it is not hard rock but Richard

Claydeman and Celine Dion, Robert Miles or Gina G.

In fact, I was lucky to watch a class at all, and the suggestion that I might join in provoked the sort of response you would get from announcing a female judge for a small willy competition. Training and development officer Margaret Peggie likens it to women going down a coal mine. "Especially for older women, the presence of a man changes things. They come in, strip down to a T-shirt and slacks or a leotard and chat in friends."

Dingley agrees: "We appreciate that men would benefit from this and the first male teacher has just qualified. But I wouldn't be happy bringing men into an established class. Anyway, I think what I do is too 'floaty' for men. I think they want more circuit-training type exercise; this is more aesthetic, more dance."

As well, back to the Bullworker. More details about Health and Beauty Exercise from 52 London St, Chertsey, Surrey, KT 16 8AJ. Tel 01932 564567.

Girardelli
to end
brilliant
career

Skiing

Marc Girardelli, the five times overall World Cup champion who has won more medals and titles than any other man, will announce his retirement next week.

Sources close to Girardelli, who has won 13 medals from six World Championships and three Olympics in a 17-year career, say the 33-year-old will make his decision public on Monday.

Although born in Austria, Girardelli raced for Luxembourg after falling out with the Austrian federation. An all-rounder, he has not competed since December, and although he had been due to defend his combined title at the World Championships this week, he did not go to Sestriere.

The Austrian team had a promising day in the Italian resort yesterday, with Fritz Strobl leading six Austrians into the top seven places in the first training run for Saturday's men's downhill. France's Luc Alphand, who leads the World Cup this season in both downhill and super-G, was the interper, clocking the second fastest time.

Strobl, who has won two World Cup downhills this season, clocked 1min 55.88sec down the Kandelshaus-Banchetta course, over a two-mile track which has a vertical drop of 3,000ft. He was 0.11sec quicker than Alphand, who went into the event confident after winning the last World Cup downhill before the championships.

Werner Franz was third best, ahead of Hannes Trinkl and Andreas Schifferer, with the defending champion, Patrick Ortlieb, sixth. Teams are allowed four skiers per team, but there are five Austrians because Ortlieb qualifies in his own right.

Norway's Atle Skjardal, who won the super-giant slalom title on Monday and, like Alphand, has won three downhills this season, was 38th fastest. Some skiers use practice runs to survey the course rather than to test their speed.

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Ladbrokes jump into the big pool

Racing
GREG WOOD

As either Guinevere or Lancelot prepares to turn the mechanical separation of Britons from their cash into a bi-weekly event this evening, there may just be hope that another ball has finally started to roll. Ladbrokes, the country's largest bookmaker, yesterday announced that it is to install Te Direct betting terminals in every one of its 1,900 outlets, and the possibility of a Lottery-style Superbet on racing suddenly became a great deal more credible.

Until now, three of the four biggest betting-shop chains - Ladbrokes, William Hill and Stanley Racing - had held out against the innovative Te Direct terminals, which send bets directly into all of the Te's pools and thus make pool betting in general, and on the small-stake, big-payout bets such as the Te's Te Direct and Te Direct Jackpot, much more attractive to punters.

With Ladbrokes finally on board, however, the remaining waverers will surely follow, and betting terminals operating on very similar lines to Camelot's should soon be a feature in all but a handful of Britain's 8,700 betting offices.

This has important implications. The idea of a Superbet has been bouncing around for years, to such an extent that familiarity with the term nationwide, not to mention a general public now used to picking numbers on a computer ticket, the founda-

tions are now in place for a Jackpot-type bet on one race a week, or perhaps for an all-out marketing push behind the existing Jackpot.

"Initial discussions with Channel 4, the BBC, the Horserace Betting Levy Board and British Horseracing Board suggest a willingness to launch a TV bet with 'small-stake, big-win' potential," Chris Bell, Ladbrokes' managing director, said yesterday. "All parties wish to take maximum advantage of this opportunity to boost turnover."

Whatever becomes of the Superbet, Ladbrokes are not in the deal simply to bring a smile to the face of Lord Wyatt, whose long - very long - tenure as the Te's chairman is drawing to a close.

For example, the 29 pence deduction from every pound staked on the Jackpot, 23 pence is retained by the bookmaker as the commission for accepting the bet, with the remaining six pence split between the Te and Te Direct, a separate company owned by the Te, Coral and, following yesterday's deal, Ladbrokes too.

The bookies will pay £7 per shop, per week, to rent their terminals, an arrangement which will also be open to any other chains wishing to join. This too seems fairly generous, since it

would cost £1,500 to purchase a terminal outright (just try and persuade Radio Rentals to do a similar deal for you, tell). Yet the feeling at the Te is that there is little choice if pool betting is ever to offer serious competition to fixed odds.

"You don't get a piece of Ladbrokes' turnover for nothing," Tom Phillips, the Te's finance director, pointed out. "We are still trying to make up the ground that was lost in the 10 years after off-course betting was legalised, when the Te was not allowed to own betting shops."

In the face of stiff - and thoroughly unfavourable - competition from the National Lottery, many bookmakers have introduced innovations (Lucky Numbers and 49s for instance) which offer no direct benefit to racing. The Te's profits go straight back into the sport, so a development which seems sure to boost them must be welcomed.

It must also be noted, however, that yesterday's press release includes the news that deductions from the Placepot are to rise by 1 per cent, from 26 to 27 per cent, which implies that punters are being asked to make a contribution of their own to yesterday's ground-breaking deal. Even so, the Placepot still offers much better value, and far more fun, than Camelot's alternative, something to bear in mind when deciding what to do with your loose change this afternoon.

Betting on Saturday's Te Gold Trophy yesterday centred on Edelweiss Du Moulin, who is now 11-4 from 7-2 with Coral.

One Man: Facing up to a tough challenge at Ascot today

Photograph: David Ashdown

Sound can be the best Man

It is an interesting paradox that many punters would nominate One Man as the best chaser currently in training, but rather fewer would risk even a shilling on his chance of winning the Gold Cup at Cheltenham next month, writes Greg Wood.

Chasing's greatest prize appears to ask too much of the grey's stamina, and indeed some would argue that the number of horses able to see out the 26-furlong trip is decreasing all the time. Yet at the other end of the distance scale, there is no end of top-class performers, and the final furlong of the Queen Mother Champion Chase regularly provides the most thrilling conclusion to any race at the Festival.

How fascinating it is, then, to find one of our best two-milers, Sound Man, lining up against his near-namesake One Man for the Comer Chase at Ascot this afternoon, over a distance, two and a half miles, which should suit both horses ideally.

With the promising novice Strong Promise and the course specialist Big Man also in opposition, nothing can be taken for granted, but it seems likely that this will be a Man's race. But which one? The grey, winner of the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day, seems sure to start favourite, while Sound Man's jumping has sometimes let him down when the pressure is on.

It may be significant, though, that Charlie Swan, who was associated with Sound Man (3.05) during his excellent novice season, will be in his saddle once again this afternoon, and what value there is in today's race must lie with Edward O'Grady's runner. The best bet, however,

is probably to enjoy the moment and hope that the best Man wins.

While punters will turn their attention towards Ascot, the all-weather card at Wolverhampton will also generate more interest than usual this afternoon, as Lanfranco Dettori swings into the plate on a British course for the first time this year.

The first jockey since Lester Piggott to capture the imagination of the non-punting public, and a thousand times more media-friendly, the Italian has numbered Top Of The Pops and the Cheltenham Show among his non-racing engagements in recent months, so Wolverhampton in February may come as something of a shock to the system.

Backers, though, will be surprised if Dettori's famous determination is not in evidence, and it will be an excellent afternoon for the bookies if he fails in ride at least one of his three mounts to victory.

Mandarin (2.50), who ran 23 times last year under a variety of riders, but whose three successes all came with Dettori on board, looks a particularly promising candidate.

RESULTS

CARLISLE

1.40c 1. Phosphorus (A) 4.7 far; 2. Catherine's Choice 20-1; 3. 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SECOND TEST: Caddick strives for recognition but Silverwood is ruled out as New Zealand look to turn defiance into attack

Atherton unlikely to adopt a bold strategy

It is much the same with England's cricket team, who have not registered a series win abroad since they were last here five years ago - a victory

"The series is still wide open," Atherton said after Tues-

"Wanganui was a hard game after Auckland, which went the whole five days and which was incredibly tense on the final afternoon," he explained. "Some

although it would have been nice to have a full complement to choose from, we haven't." However, Silverwood's injury has definitely advanced Andy Caddick's chances of playing, particularly as the re-

For most of us, Caddick's presence is long overdue. Incredibly, the England management probably do not see it like that and they may consider giving the directionless Alan

It is against Attraction's cautious nature to make changes when no ground has been lost.

a Test in Wellington. I pulled out of the game with a shoulder

It was also the match when David "Syd" Lawrence split his kneecap in two as he came in to bowl. It was a horrific injury which until recently – when news of an intended comeback for the Gloucestershire bowler surfaced – was thought to have ended his career. Tired or not, old hussins Syd would have done nothing else but give his all in Wanganui.

Free-thinking Astle pays his dues

**TODAY'S
NUMBER**

8,000,000

His first crisis came, not as many might suppose in the male-dominated circles of cricket, when his elder sister, Lisa,

"It wouldn't have happened without Danny," he graciously admitted. "It probably wouldn't have happened if we'd just looked to bat time either, so scoring runs was important, which is what he encouraged me to do. But most of all, it kept us in the series and that's a big bug."



Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

Testing time for Taylor

I am looking forward to getting to South Africa, getting on tour, getting away from the added pressure of an Australian summer, being at home," Taylor said. Taylor has won 13 of his 24 Tests as captain, including five series, three at home against Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the West Indies in the past 12 months.

Kimber too shrewd for students

Chris Kimber may not have got his penalty corners going but he engineered the downfall of Cambridge University with a string of shrewd passes out of defence and some timely tack-

Ten minutes after the interval, John Crewe put the RAF

followed up a Kimber corner shot for the final goal.

RAP: A Seaton (capt), F McLean, C Jumbler, M Wealdon, D Oakley, A Bensford, P Anstee, S Chaine, G Carmell, N Power, J Crew. Substitutes used: M Hussain, A Bethearte.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY: P Piotrowski (Sands), D Churton, O Brew, T Parr, M Lorser, J Mayer, M Meredith (capt), J Bateman, D Heathcote, G Player. Substitutes used: T Gilman.

Early warning for Lewis from Steward

For six minutes in Las Vegas on Friday night Lennox Lewis may face a crucial test in his career. His mentor and trainer, Emanuel Steward, sees it that way; Lewis,

Hall agrees two-year Wigan deal

Hall had been due to join the Australian Rugby League, but has negotiated his way out of that

bie Goulding, has pledged himself to give his all for the Cup holders in the fourth round

Nathan Picchi, who was released by Leeds earlier this week.

Rugby's future

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Boxing

For six minutes in Las Vegas on Friday night Lennox Lewis may face a crucial test in his career. His mentor and trainer, Emanuel Steward, sees it that way; Lewis, apparently, does not.

**Wigan have been given
boost for their Silk C**

Saturday with the news that their Welsh international hooker, Martin Hall, is to stay with the club.

WEEKEND POOLS FORECAST

Nationalwide Football League

First Division

1 Barnsley vs Port Vale	1	37 Watford vs Millwall	X	57 Park vs St Mirren	X
2 Birmingham vs Portsmouth	X	38 Wycombe vs Crewe	2	58 St Johnstone vs Arbroath	X
3 Huddersfield vs Wolves	2	Playing Friday in Bristol City vs Stockport.			38 Spring vs Dundee
4 Manchester City vs Southampton	1				
5 Oldham vs Grimsby	1				
6 Reading vs Bolton	2				
7 West Bromwich vs Swindon	X				

Also playing (not on coupon): Crystal Palace vs Bradford City, Ipswich vs Queen's Park Rangers. **Playing Friday:** Charlton vs Trarnore, Stoke vs Oxford. **Sunday:** Sheffield United vs Norwich.

Second Division

1 Blackpool vs Peterborough	X				
2 Bournemouth vs Westport	X				
3 Burnley vs York	1				
4 Bury vs Bournemouth	X				
5 Chesterfield vs Wrexham	1				
6 Gillingham vs Bristol Rovers	X				
7 Luton vs Plymouth	X				
8 Rotherham vs Preston	2				
9 Shrewsbury vs Notts County	1				

Third Division

1 Barnet vs Haverford	1				
2 Brighton vs Hartlepool	2				
3 Cambridge vs Hull	1				
4 Cardiff vs Colchester	2				
5 Chester vs Doncaster	1				
6 Dagenham vs Reading	1				
7 Lincoln vs Fulham	2				
8 Northampton vs Swindon	2				
9 Scarborough vs Darlington	1				
10 Southampton vs Mansfield	1				
11 Torquay vs Leyton Orient	X				
12 Wigan vs Carlisle	X				

Fourth Division

1 Accrington vs Rochdale	1				
2 Aldershot vs Colwyn Bay	1				
3 Ayr vs Clyde	1				
4 Arbroath vs Stannear	2				
5 Cambuslang vs Livingston	2				
6 Hamilton vs Berwick	2				
7 Queen of South vs Stenhousemuir	2				

Third Division

15 Alloa vs Cowdenbeath	1				
16 Arbroath vs Airdrie Rovers	2				
17 Forfar vs Ross County	1				
18 Inverness City vs Elgin	1				
19 Queen's Park vs Montrose	2				

Fourth Division

15 Blackpool vs Birmingham	1				
16 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				
17 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				
18 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				
19 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				

First Division

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18 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				
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Second Division

1 Blackpool vs Peterborough	1				
2 Bournemouth vs Westport	1				
3 Burnley vs York	1				
4 Bury vs Bournemouth	1				
5 Chesterfield vs Wrexham	1				
6 Gillingham vs Bristol Rovers	1				
7 Luton vs Plymouth	1				
8 Rotherham vs Preston	1				
9 Shrewsbury vs Notts County	1				

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7 Lincoln vs Fulham	1				
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12 Wigan vs Carlisle	1				

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2 Brighton vs Hartlepool	1				
3 Cambridge vs Hull	1				
4 Cardiff vs Colchester	1				
5 Chester vs Doncaster	1				

TODAY'S FLYTUBE

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Senators have pr

Health and beauty
Keith Elliott on the gimmick-free
alternative to aerobics, page 22

sport

Astle pays his dues
Derek Pringle meets New Zealand's
unlikely batting hero, page 24

Tanner banned for three months

Football

ADAM SZRETER

The Ipswich Town manager George Burley last night promised to stand by his mid-field player, Adam Tanner, after he was banned by the Football Association for three months for taking cocaine.

The 23-year-old became only the third English League player to test positive for cocaine after being asked to provide a random sample at the Ipswich training ground on 9 December.

After a two-and-a-half hour hearing at Lancaster Gate, during which Tanner made full admissions and said he had been "guilty of senseless and foolish behaviour", the three-man commission handed out a sentence which was regarded as lenient.

"Adam knows that he has done wrong, that he has let down himself, his family and the club and that if it happens again it will be the end of his football career," said Burley. "He made a very bad mistake and has to accept his punishment. But the expert evidence said that this was a one-off isolated incident in social circumstances."

Burley and the mid-field player, Simon Milton, acted as character witnesses for Tanner, who admitted knowingly allowing his drink to be spiked with the Class A performance-enhancing drug in a nightclub.

Brendon Batson, the deputy chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, stressed at the hearing that the PFA's campaign against drugs in football would continue. "Our position on drugs remains the same - they have no place in football," Batson said.

"We do not want to see any jads, whether junior or senior professionals, putting their careers and the good name of football on the line. Adam had a very good hearing. The decision taken suits the offence and now the lad has to go on to put things in order."

David Ginola has hinted he would relish a return to Paris St-Germain after losing his first-team place at Newcastle. Ginola has made only two starts in five matches under Kenny Dalglish. "As far as transfers are concerned, nothing is definite until the forms are signed," Ginola said. "But I'm disappointed when I see Paris's results and I've not forgotten the club where I had some magic times."

The Middlesbrough manager Bryan Robson has added to his Brazilian contingent by sign-

ing Emerson's cousin, Fabio, on an 18-month contract after a trial. Fabio, a 24-year-old midfielder, holds a Portuguese passport so Middlesbrough have no work permit problems.

Meanwhile, Middlesbrough fans yesterday delivered 18,500 signed postcards, including one from their former player Wilf Mannion, in a petition to the FA to try to overturn the three-point penalty following their failure to fulfil a Premiership fixture at Blackburn in December. Dave Roberts, who comments for a local radio station, said: "You can fine the club and that will hit them hard but you're not punishing the fans at the same time, and that's the message the fans wanted to put across."

Mick Jones, the assistant to the sacked Plymouth Argyle manager Neil Warnock, has been put in caretaker charge of the Second Division club.

Bournemouth are to apply to the High Court to withdraw the receivers, called in last week by Lloyds Bank, who are owed £2.1m of the club's 4.4m debt. Bournemouth's director Roy Pack claims the club has never been in default with interest or capital repayments - but Bournemouth's new Trust Committee believes Pack's stance is not in the club's best interests.

Brighton supporters have made it clear that Saturday's protest at the Goldstone Ground, involving fans from all over the country, will still go ahead despite a series of measures aimed at placating them.

Terry Venables is to hold a training camp in Europe to help prepare overseas-based Australian players for forthcoming World Cup qualifying matches. The former England manager plans to base the four-day coaching session in either Britain or the Netherlands.

Bobby Robson has received a vote of confidence from the Barcelona club board ahead of tomorrow's Spanish Cup tie with Real Madrid. The former England coach has also been backed by a group of fans who took out a newspaper advert asking for "respect, justice and support" for Robson.

However, Robson will be nervous to hear that the Ajax coach Louis van Gaal's negotiations to sign for a foreign club were "at an advanced stage" but he still felt it too early to name his new employer. "I have been linked to AC Milan, Barcelona, Newcastle United, Bayern Munich, you name it. I have to admit that list flatters me," he said.

Horseplay on the snow and ice at St Moritz



Switzerland experienced all the fun of a day at the races when St Moritz hosted a meeting with a difference this week. Horses raced on a frozen lake covered in snow wearing grips to keep them upright. Michael Hourigan, the Irish trainer, enjoyed two winners ridden by his son Paul. Racing, page 23; photograph, Mike Hewitt/Allsport

Clark warns City crowd to be patient

Frank Clark has called on his Manchester City players to reward the faith of their die-hard Maine Road fans by harnessing the magic of the FA Cup.

City take on Watford in a delayed fourth round tie tomorrow night, with a home clash with Middlesbrough the lucrative prize if they overcome the Second Division club.

Clark, who has steered his side to a five-game unbeaten run since becoming the club's fifth manager this season, wants a repeat of the sort of stylish performance they put on at Oxford

on Sunday, where they won 4-1, Clark's first victory as manager. "It's important to win your home games to get the fans on your side and keep them there," said Clark, who began his reign with three draws before an FA Cup win at Brentford and the victory at Oxford. "A good FA Cup run would give everyone connected to the club a big lift and especially the fans who have been absolutely magnificent."

Despite all their problems, City have attracted crowds averaging almost 27,000 and they expect that many to watch the

Watford game. Clark has warned them of the need for patience as Watford have demonstrated their resilience by compiling a 22-match unbeaten run that has included just nine victories.

Watford's manager, Kenny Jackett, who saw his team avoid the Football League record of eight successive draws by beating Rotherham 2-0 on Saturday, believes his men can upset the odds if they can keep the City fans quiet. "It will be a very big crowd and a very vocal crowd, but if we can get to half-time lev-

el then they may turn against City," he said. "This is the kind of game our players will have dreamed about, playing against a big club like Manchester City in a terrific stadium and in front of a big crowd. It will be a great experience from them and I believe that we are well capable of going there and getting a win if we perform well on the night."

Watford could welcome back their striker Kevin Phillips after an ankle injury that has sidelined him for 10 months, although Devon White and Keith Millen are

suspended and Gary Porter and David Connolly are injured.

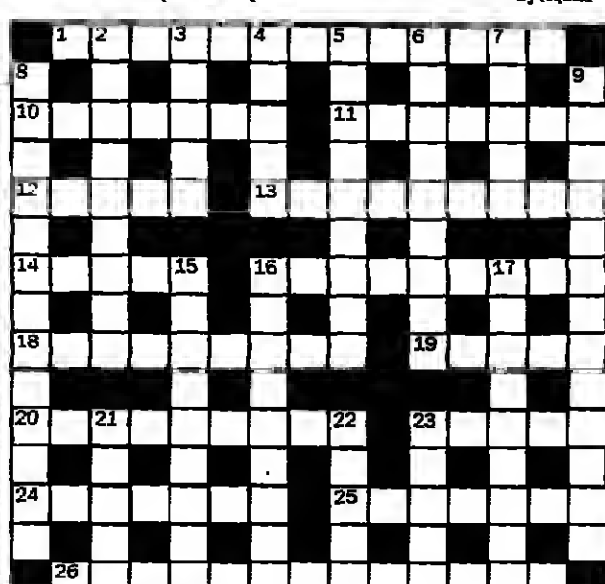
With on-loan Nottingham Forest full-back Craig Armstrong ineligible, Jackett will once again be forced to turn to the youngsters, with tender trio Richard Flash, Dominic Luden and Wayne Andrews all included in the squad.

City also have their problems, with their on-loan Forest goalkeeper, Tommy Wright, unavailable, their new signing Kevin Horlock cup-tied, Ian Brightwell ruled out by a calf injury and central defensive pair Kit Symons and Alan Kavanagh both having flu and hamstring doubts.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3214, Wednesday 5 February

By Aquila



Tuesday's Solution

1. JAMAS GORPHEE
2. RECORD LIBRARY
3. ANE F B D R P
4. BOON FILLY APPE
5. E F S E O C
6. SILVIAN MEAGHIN
7. U S
8. HALBER BANQUET
9. A T L E E Y M A
10. PANAMA CEMENT OPA
11. L A N E S I E
12. ENDOWMENT POLICY
13. S E E C E F W H
14. SUSPECT ARTIST

- ACROSS**
- One appointed by pope to call attention to west, for example (8,5)
 - Constantly overdrawn, yet greatly admired (7)
 - Virginia, one who is entertained most impressively (7)
 - Loose-jointed section of plank yielding (5)
 - Able to keep English wine in French bank? (9)
 - Standards of society fall off to start with (5)
 - Concerned with the line from Lancaster? (9)
 - Willingness to change one note for A — that gives the above quality (9)
 - Boy taking on Olympic finalists is involved in a row (5)
 - Soldiers, united in mission, demand vigour on the square (4,5)

- DOWN**
- March King (thus states composer) (5)
 - Novelty, having no pub welcome? (7)
 - Leaflet describing atrium (7)
 - Striker not back at work? (6-7)
 - The edge of Wimbledon? (9)
 - Cheese in American bowler (5)
 - Depths of rain, perhaps, engulfing daughter (5)
 - Book in which evil is cut out (9)
 - Consolidated, say, they stop playing (9)
 - New delivery marks (5)
 - In favour of time-share build-up? (13)
 - One taking valentines, we hear, replaces these unusual (13)

- Hide female dressing. Dancer? (9)
- Untypical behaviour near caber-tossing (9)
- He abandons engineers, new to lightweight railway... (9)
- Platform for engineer of another kind? (5)
- Godless inspiring words of opera, *Tosca* (5)
- Wages spiral (5)

Zombie, Doggy and the song album from hell

Cricket

NICK DUXBURY

Karaoke crooners are in for a tonal-twang session on the cricket fields of New Zealand where all five one-dayers against England will offer a host of tracks from the *Greatest Dressing-room Album Ever*. Personally selected tunes, including "Cigarettes and Alcohol", will add to the repertoire of England's "Barry Army" touring fans, thanks to the New Zealanders' desire to spice up the tour have rarely lasted longer than a three-minute single, has a liking for another song by Brit pop's finest - "Some-

sponded with a light-hearted selection. Hence the choice of the once wayward Phil Tufnell for the Oasis number concerning smoking and drinking. Darren Gough, whose star has waned after being hailed as the new Botham, still has enough self-belief to go for "Walking On Sunshine" by Katrina and the Waves. Alistair Stewart, however, may be accused of taking the tongue-in-cheek approach too far with rocker Bryan Adams' "Summer of '69".

Mike Atherton, the England captain, whose innings during the tour have rarely lasted longer than a three-minute single, has a liking for another song by Brit pop's finest - "Some-

Might Say", while his vice-captain Nasser Hussain has no doubt thinking about the performance against the might of Matabeleland with "Zombie".

The opener Bryan Young has done his credibility irreparable harm by having Sade's "Smooth Operator" on the Kiwi song-sheet, but they do warm up a little with Chris Harris' ode to Tommy Roe's "Dizzy" and Nathan Aspin's "Unbelievable" by EMI.

Sadly, the best song may never be heard. England's reserve wicket-keeper, Jack Russell, is struggling to get a game but should he get the call, clear the throats for "How Much is that Doggy in the Window?"

ENGLAND'S HITS AND MISSES		
The Official England List	The Independent Bootleg Suggestion	
Mike Atherton and Nick Knight	Some Might Say (by Oasis)	Should I Stay Or Should I Go (The Clash)
Nasser Hussain	Zombie (The Cranberries)	Go Now (Moody Blues)
Graham Thorpe	Swamp Thing (The Grid)	Stuck in the Middle with You (Stealers Wheel)
Alistair Stewart	Summer of '69 (Bryan Adams)	Halfway to Paradise (Billy Fury)
John Crawley	Wonderwall (Oasis)	Son of my Father (Middle of the Road)
Dominic Cork	There's Nothing I Won't Do (UK)	Alone Again, Naturally (Gilbert O'Sullivan)
Darren Gough	Walking On Sunshine (Katrina and the Waves)	Howzat (Flirt)
Ronnie Irani	Two Tribes (Frankie Goes to Hollywood)	On a Day After Tomorrow (Tina Turner)
Andy Caddick	I Feel Good (James Brown)	Don't Look Back in Anger (Basil)
Robert Croft	Dellah (Tom Jones)	Nowhere Man (Beatles)
Phil Tufnell	Cigarettes and Alcohol (Oasis)	(Spinnell) Wizard (The Who)
Chris Silverwood	Supersonic (Oasis)	Bat Out of Hell (Meatloaf)
Craig White	Son of a Gun (UK)	Great Balls of Fire (Jerry Lee Lewis)
Alan Mullally	Ain't Nothing But the Real Thing (Marlene Dietrich and Elton John)	Wannabe (Spice Girls)
Jack Russell	How Much is that Doggy in the Window? (Celtic Car)	Let's of Centre (Suzanne Vega)
David Lloyd		You're Lost That (S) Loving Feeling (Righteous Brothers)
		Sassy Mussy (Silly Billy)
		at... Reasons To Be Cheerful (Ian Dury)

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• *** Julian
• Additional nights £20
• Heathrow, Stansted & Manchester

ROME £224
• 2 nights B&B
• *** Ponte Sisto
• Additional nights £33
• Gatwick, Heathrow & Manchester

FLORENCE £207
• 2 nights B&B
• *** Medici
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